pdc

APRIL 1966

WEIRD

35¢

IN THIS ISSUE
MORE
VAMPIRES
WEREWOLVES
and
MONSTERS
THAN ANY
OTHER
MAGAZINE

volume one
number eleven

NOW, WHAT MAKES YOU DELIGHTFUL GHOULISH FIENDS THINK I'M PUTTING YOU ON?---DID YOU KNOW THAT UNTIL RECENT TIMES, NO MAN WITH THE NAME OF GEORGE, HAD EVER BEEN HANGED?---THINK I'M SPOOFING YOU?--THEN, CHECK THE RECORD!--AND SPEAKING OF RECORDS, HERE ARE SOME RECIPES TAKEN FROM AN APOTHECARY'S PERSCRIPTION BOOK!
HUMAN SKULLS
REDUCED TO POWDER and MIXED WITH RED WINE WERE RECOMMENDED FOR THE CURING OF EPILEPSY and DYSENTERY. ... DRINK,--ANYONE?
COFFIN RINGS
WHEN DUG OUT OF A GRAVE ... WILL CURE RHEUMATISM! ... DO YOUR BONES HURT? --HMMMN?
IF ... A FRUIT TREE BLOOMS and FRUITS TWICE IN A SEASON, A MEMBER OF THE FAMILY OWNING THE TREE, WILL DIE BEFORE THE YEAR IS OUT!
.... BE MY GUEST! ENJOY! ENJOY! TILL NEXT WE MEET.

WEIRD

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INDIVIDUAL COPY PRICE 35c. APPLICATION TO MAIL AT SECOND CLASS RATES IS PENDING AT NEW YORK, N. Y. PRINTED IN U.S.A.

IN THE SHADOW OF THE SPHINX, IN THE EXOTIC AND MYSTERIOUS LAND OF THE ANCIENT PHARAOHS, THERE WAS THE LAIR OF THIS EVIL SHE THING! AMID THE RUINED SPLENDOR OF VANISHED PEOPLES AND CIVILIZATIONS SHE DWELT, WAITING, BIDING HER TIME! AND THE ONCE SACRED VULTURES OF THE TEMPLES WAITED PATIENTLY, KNOWING THEY WOULD SOON BE GORGING ON THE ROTTEN FLESH OF HER VICTIMS! FOR SHE WAS HALF WOMAN, HALF THING FROM THE LOWER DEPTHS! SHE WAS ALL THE EVIL NIGHTMARES THAT MEN HAVE DREAMED SINCE THE VERY BEGINNING OF TIME! SHE WAS DEATH AND DESOLATION AND ETERNAL DARKNESS, BORN OF FEAR AND HORROR AND TERROR! SHE WAS ALL THIS AND MORE—FOR SHE WAS BEAUTIFUL WITH AN UNEARTHLY LOVELINESS THAT WAS WORSE THAN THE FOULNESS OF HER BLACK SOUL WHICH THE BEAUTY MASKED! SHE WAS—**THE CRAWLER...**

WEB of the WIDOW

MATT TAYLOR, HEAD OF A MUSEUM EXPEDITION WHICH IS EXPLORING NEAR THE ANCIENT PYRAMIDS OF EGYPT, DOES A FOOLISH AND CARELESS THING IN HIS EXCITMENT OVER A NEW FIND...

LATER, AS TAYLOR LIES DYING AND HIS ASSOCIATES LOOK ON HELPLESSLY...

WE'VE TRIED EVERYTHING! NO SERUM WILL WORK AGAINST THE BITE OF A TEMPLE SPIDER! I'M AFRAID THE POOR DEVIL IS DONE FOR.

A ROTTEN SHAME, TOO! HE HAD A BRILLIANT FUTURE BEFORE HIM! HE WAS ONE OF THE BEST IN HIS FIELD!

UHHHHH— OHHHHH—

SUDDENLY

YOU DESPAIR TOO SOON, GENTLEMAN! I THINK *I* CAN SAVE YOUR FRIEND!

HUH! B-BUT WHO ARE YOU? WHERE DID YOU COME FROM? AND WHAT MAKES YOU THINK THAT YOU CAN HELP?

OOOOHHHH—

THE EXOTIC STRANGER KNEELS BESIDE THE COT AND PUTS HER VIVID RED MOUTH TO THE WOUND...

NEVER MIND HOW I SHALL DO IT— BUT I WILL! YOUR FRIEND WILL BE COMPLETELY RECOVERED IN A DAY OR TWO!

AND SURE ENOUGH, A FEW DAYS LATER...

I DON'T KNOW HOW YOU DID IT, SUTHINA, BUT I'M GRATEFUL! AND NOT ONLY FOR SAVING MY LIFE—YOU SEEM TO KNOW SO ***MUCH*** ABOUT THIS COUNTRY, EVEN ABOUT ***MY*** PROFESSION! I'D LIKE TO GIVE YOU A JOB...

A JOB? NOT A WORD I FULLY UNDERSTAND! BUT I WOULD LIKE TO LEAVE THIS PLACE FOR A TIME! WOULD THAT BE POSSIBLE?

SO THEY STRIKE A BARGAIN...

I WILL RETURN TO YOUR COUNTRY AND WORK WITH YOU! PERHAPS I ***CAN*** BE OF SOME SERVICE—BUT I MUST MAKE CERTAIN CONDITIONS! IF YOU WILL AGREE TO THEM...

CONDITIONS, EH? WELL, I DON'T THINK WE'LL HAVE ANY TROUBLE GETTING TOGETHER, SUTHINA! OF COURSE YOU MUST UNDERSTAND THAT I WORK FOR A FOUNDATION, AND THE MONEY DOESN'T EXACTLY GROW ON BUSHES!

BUT ON THE DAY OF SAILING, MATT TAYLOR FINDS THAT SUTHINA IS CONCERNED WITH OTHER THINGS THAN MONEY...

YOU HAVE MANY OF THE STRANGE CRATES, MISSY! BUT I AM THE BEST DRAGOMAN IN ALL EGYPT! I HAVE TAKEN GOOD CARE OF THEM!

YOU HAD BETTER, BAHI, OR I'LL FLAY YOU ALIVE! NOW SEE THAT NONE OF THEM ARE BROKEN OPEN!

HMM— WONDER WHAT SHE'S GOT IN THOSE CRATES! BUT I PROMISED I WOULDN'T ASK!

THE TRIP HOME IS UNEVENTFUL ENOUGH, THOUGH TAYLOR DOES PUZZLE ABOUT THE MYSTERIOUS CRATES! BUT HE KEEP HIS PROMISE AND DOES NOT QUESTION SUTHINA ABOUT THEM...

NOW SUTHINA, YOU MUSTN'T MIND IF MY WIFE SEEMS A LITTLE CURT AT TIMES! I'M AWAY A LOT, OF COURSE, AND THEN SHE'LL BE SURPRISED TO SEE YOU! SHE MIGHT WONDER ABOUT US!

HAH-HAH! SHE NEED HAVE NO FEAR! I AM NOT INTERESTED IN YOU IN **THAT** WAY, MATT!

TAYLOR'S FEARS ARE JUSTIFIED! THE TWO WOMEN DISLIKE EACH OTHER FROM THE VERY BEGINNING...

THIS IS SUTHINA, MOLLY! SHE IS GOING TO HELP ME IN THE LAB, AND SHE'LL BE STAYING HERE FOR A TIME!

HOW DO YOU DO, MRS. TAYLOR!

HELLO! IF MATT WANTS YOU TO STAY, I'M SURE THERE IS A GOOD REASON!

LATER...

THIS IS WHERE WE'LL DO MOST OF OUR WORK! I'VE GOT A NEW RESTORER THAT I WANT TO TRY ON THESE OLD MANUSCRIPTS WE FOUND!

YES, THE HEROD PALIMPSEST! BUT NOW I MUST SEE IF MY CRATES HAVE ARRIVED!

TROUBLE BEGINS...

BUT I **INSIST** THAT THE CRATES BE STORED IN **MY** ROOM! I **INSIST!** I MUST BE WITH THEM AT EVERY POSSIBLE MOMENT!

BUT YOU CAN'T! YOU'LL UPSET MY HOUSE! THESE HORRIBLE OLD CRATES...

NOW, MOLLY, I PROMISED SUTHINA...

BUT SUTHINA WING! AND ONE DAY NOT LONG AFTERWARD...

EEEEEEEKKKKK— A HORRIBLE, LOATHSOME BLACK SPIDER! IN **MY** HOUSE! **OWWW-** I'LL KILL IT! I **HATE** SPIDERS!

SUDDENLY SUTHINA RUSHES IN...

FOOL! IMBECILE! LEAVE IT ALONE! HOW DARE YOU TOUCH ANYTHING OF MINE? TAKE THAT!

Y-YOURS? THE SPIDER IS **YOURS?** **OWWWWW!**

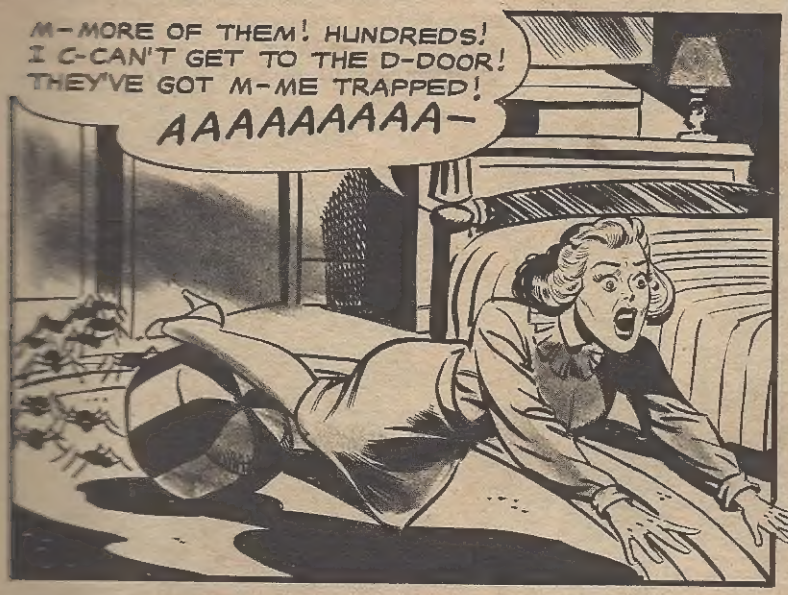
SPLAT

YES! **MINE!** IT IS A **PET!** I HAVE HAD IT FOR YEARS! NEVER TOUCH IT AGAIN, YOU UNDERSTAND?

A PET! Y-YOU PICK A **SPIDER** UP AND **FONDLE** IT! YOU ARE INSANE! I'LL SEE THAT YOU LEAVE THIS HOUSE AT ONCE!

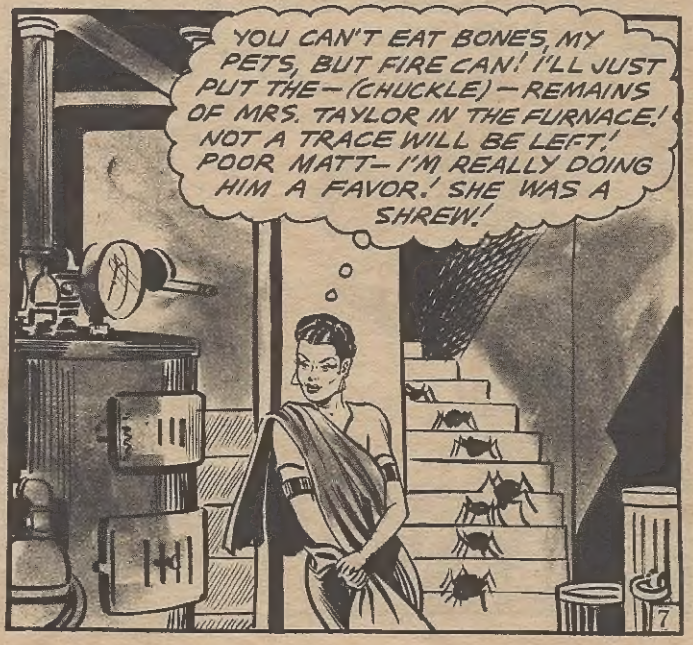
UNNERVED BY THE SCENE WITH SUTHINA, MOLLY TAYLOR GOES TO HER ROOM TO SULK!
OH, HOW I HATE THAT WOMAN! I DIDN'T WANT HER TO STAY HERE IN THE FIRST PLACE, BUT NOW SHE MUST GET OUT AT ONCE! SPIDERS, UGH! THERE'S SOMETHING STRANGE AND UNCANNY ABOUT HER...

SUDDENLY...
OH—SPIDERS! SO M-MANY OF THEM, COMING INTO MY ROOM! AFTER ME! B-BUT WHERE COULD THEY HAVE COME FROM?
EEEEEEEEKKK!


M-MORE OF THEM! HUNDREDS! I C-CAN'T GET TO THE D-DOOR! THEY'VE GOT M-ME TRAPPED!
AAAAAAAAA—

AFTER THE TERRIBLE SCREAMS DIE AWAY, THE DOOR SOFTLY OPENS, AND THERE IS SUTHINA...
SO, MY LITTLE BLACK PETS, YOU HAVE HAD YOUR MEAL! GOOD! SOON I WILL HAVE MINE! BUT WE MUST NOT LET OUR UNSUSPECTING MATT FIND US LIKE THIS! HE WOULD NOT LIKE IT, NOT AT ALL!

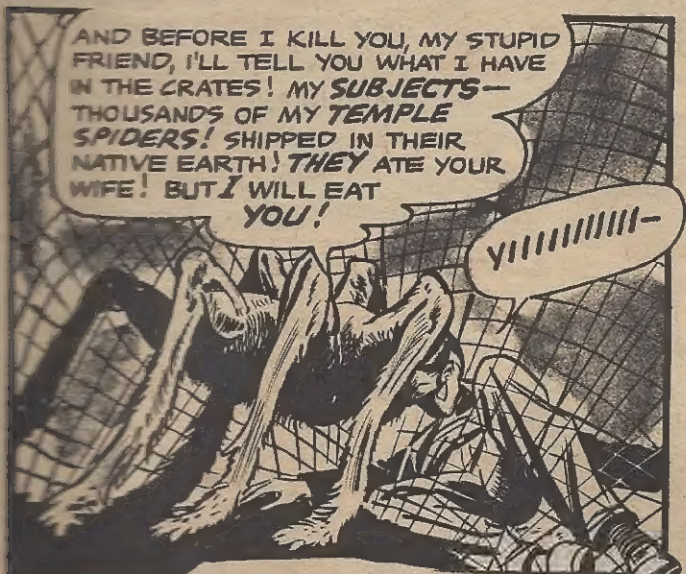
SO WE'LL JUST HAVE TO TIDY UP A BIT! HA— YOU DIDN'T LEAVE MUCH OF HER, DID YOU? BUT I UNDERSTAND— THIS WAS YOUR FIRST MEAL IN MONTHS!

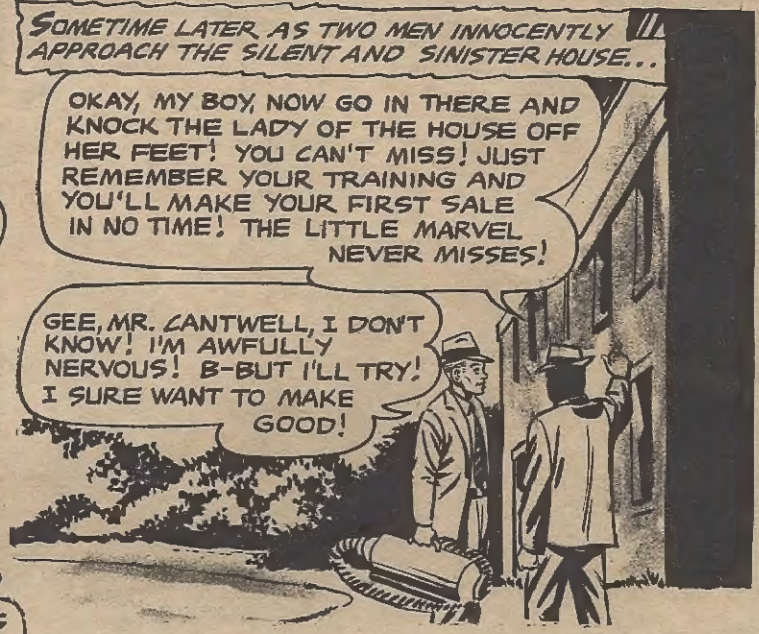

YOU CAN'T EAT BONES, MY PETS, BUT FIRE CAN! I'LL JUST PUT THE—(CHUCKLE)—REMAINS OF MRS. TAYLOR IN THE FURNACE! NOT A TRACE WILL BE LEFT! POOR MATT—I'M REALLY DOING HIM A FAVOR! SHE WAS A SHREW!

BUT THAT NIGHT WHEN MATT TAYLOR RETURNS HOME, HE IMMEDIATELY DETECTS A STRANGE ODOR IN THE HOUSE...
MOLLY? SUTHINA? WHERE THE DEVIL IS EVERYBODY? WHAT GOES ON AROUND HERE? HEY, THAT'S A FUNNY SMELL! HMMM, NOT SO FUNNY AFTER ALL! SOMETHING BURNING IN THE FURNACE!
STRANGE! WE'VE GOT AN INCINERATOR FOR BURNING RUBBISH! AND THERE'S SOMETHING I DON'T LIKE ABOUT THIS SMELL! IT SEEMS VAGUELY FAMILIAR — LIKE THE BURNING GHATS BY THE INDUS RIVER! I KNOW — SCORCHED BONES!
TAYLOR RAKES OUT THE ASH IN THE FURNACE AND GETS THE NASTIEST SHOCK OF HIS LIFE...
MY HEAVEN! A HUMAN SKULL! F-FRESHLY BURNED! BUT WHO — AND WHY?
FRANTICALLY HE DASHES UPSTAIRS...
MOLLY? WHERE ARE YOU, MOLLY? OH, SHE'S NOT IN HER ROOM, NOT ANYWHERE IN THE HOUSE! BUT THAT C-CAN'T BE HER SKULL! IT CAN'T! I WON'T BELIEVE IT! BUT MAYBE SUTHINA WILL KNOW SOMETHING!
SUTHINA!
YOU CALLED ME, MATT?
I CERTAINLY DID! WHAT THE HECK IS GOING ON AROUND HERE? WHAT'S THAT SKULL DOING IN THE FURNACE? WHERE IS MOLLY?
I'M GOING TO SEARCH YOUR ROOM, SUTHINA! YOU'RE ACTING VERY STRANGELY! IF YOU'VE DONE ANYTHING TO MY WIFE...
HA! I DIDN'T DO ANYTHING TO HER! BUT ENTER, BY ALL MEANS! I WANT YOU TO ENTER!
GAAAAA — A WEB! I'M CAUGHT!
YES, YOU ARE CAUGHT! TRAPPED IN MY WEB! YOU POOR FOOL! I ALWAYS INTENDED THIS FATE FOR YOU! HA-HA-HA-HA—

GREAT GODFREY, SUTHINA! W-WHAT IS THIS? W-WHAT KIND OF A FIEND ARE YOU? WHY DID YOU MURDER MOLLY?
I, YOU FOOL WHO IS ABOUT TO DIE, AM THE QUEEN OF THE TEMPLE SPIDERS!

I SAVED YOUR LIFE ONCE, BECAUSE MY VENOM WAS STRONGER THAN THAT OF THE SPIDER WHO BIT YOU! BUT NOW I HAVE FASTED LONG ENOUGH, AND YOU HAVE MADE ME SAFE! MY ENEMIES WILL NEVER FIND ME IN AMERICA!
AAAAAAAAA-


AND BEFORE I KILL YOU, MY STUPID FRIEND, I'LL TELL YOU WHAT I HAVE IN THE CRATES! MY SUBJECTS— THOUSANDS OF MY TEMPLE SPIDERS! SHIPPED IN THEIR NATIVE EARTH! THEY ATE YOUR WIFE! BUT I WILL EAT YOU!
YIIIIIIIIIII-

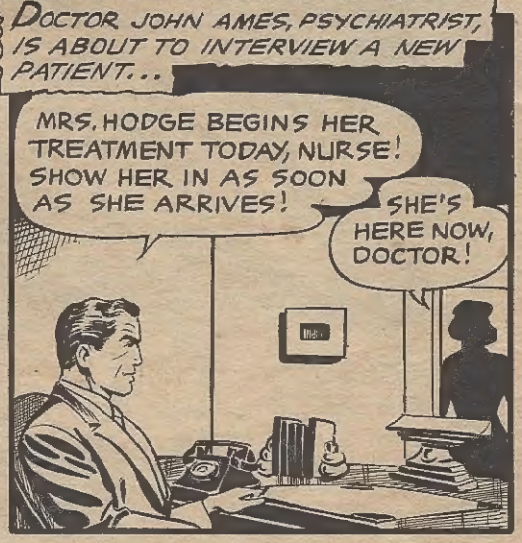

SOMETIME LATER, AS TWO MEN INNOCENTLY APPROACH THE SILENT AND SINISTER HOUSE...
OKAY, MY BOY, NOW GO IN THERE AND KNOCK THE LADY OF THE HOUSE OFF HER FEET! YOU CAN'T MISS! JUST REMEMBER YOUR TRAINING AND YOU'LL MAKE YOUR FIRST SALE IN NO TIME! THE LITTLE MARVEL NEVER MISSES!
GEE, MR. CANTWELL, I DON'T KNOW! I'M AWFULLY NERVOUS! B-BUT I'LL TRY! I SURE WANT TO MAKE GOOD!

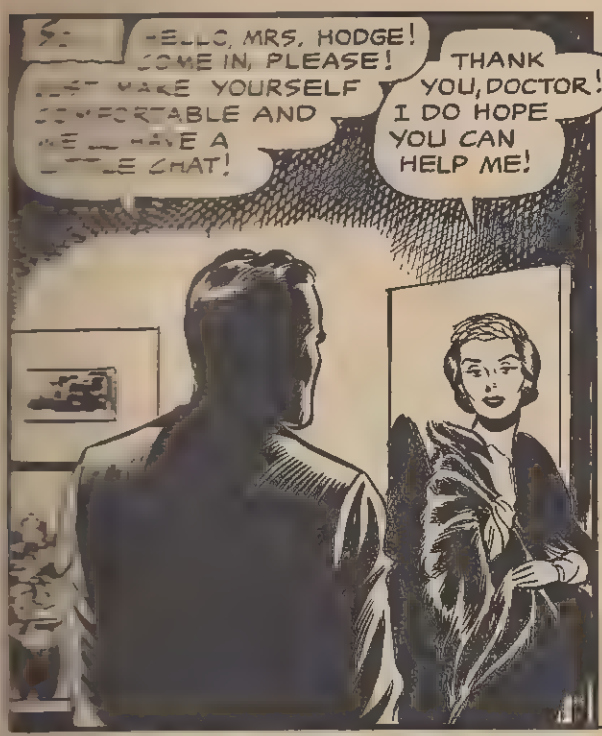
SO... GOOD AFTERNOON, MA'M! MY NAME IS FLY, CHRISTOPHER FLY! NOW I HAVE HERE...
YOUR NAME IS WHAT—FLY? OH, DO COME IN! STEP RIGHT INTO MY HOUSE...

HIS NAME IS FLY! OH, NO! THIS IS TOO GOOD! THIS IS TERRIFIC! HIS NAME IS, HA-HA-HO-HO-HEE—FLY! AND HE'S COMING INTO MY PARLOR!
GEE, KIND OF A FUNNY DAME!
The End

MOST OF US, WHO WALK IN THE BRIGHT SUNSHINE OF LIFE, SUSPECT NOTHING OF THE HORRORS THAT LIE JUST BEYOND THE EDGE OF DARKNESS — THE MURK OF THE PIT, WHERE FETID MISTS HANG LIKE SHROUDS FOR DAMNED SOULS, AND DEMONS MOAN IN THE ETERNAL NIGHT! BUT FOR THOSE WHO KNOW, FOR THOSE WHO HAVE MADE THE TERRIBLE JOURNEY INTO THE UNKNOWN REALMS OF THE SUPERNATURAL, THERE IS ONLY EVERLASTING TERROR! FOR THEY KNOW THAT **THERE ARE SUCH THINGS...**

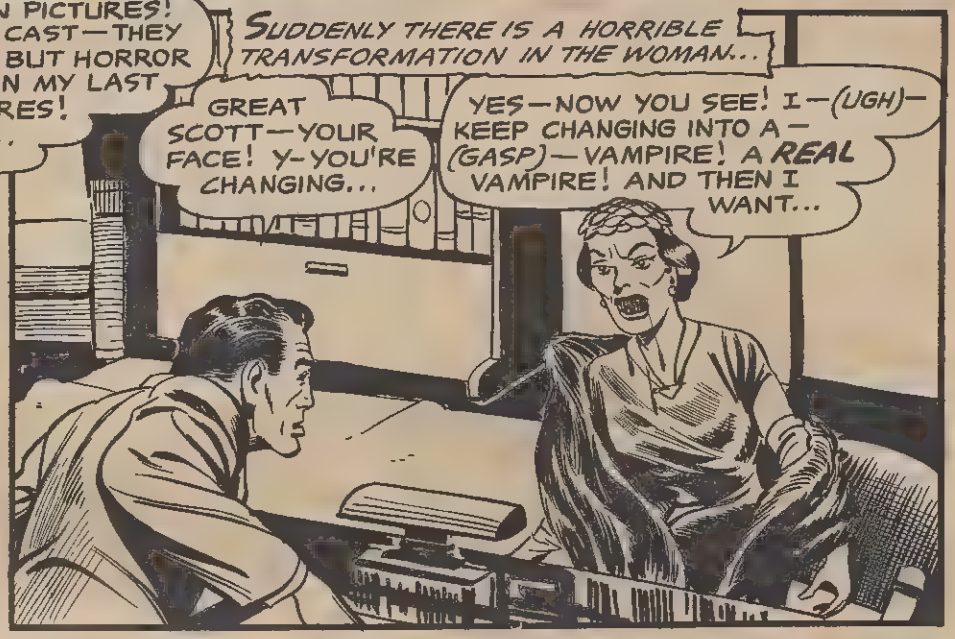
Scream no more, My Lady

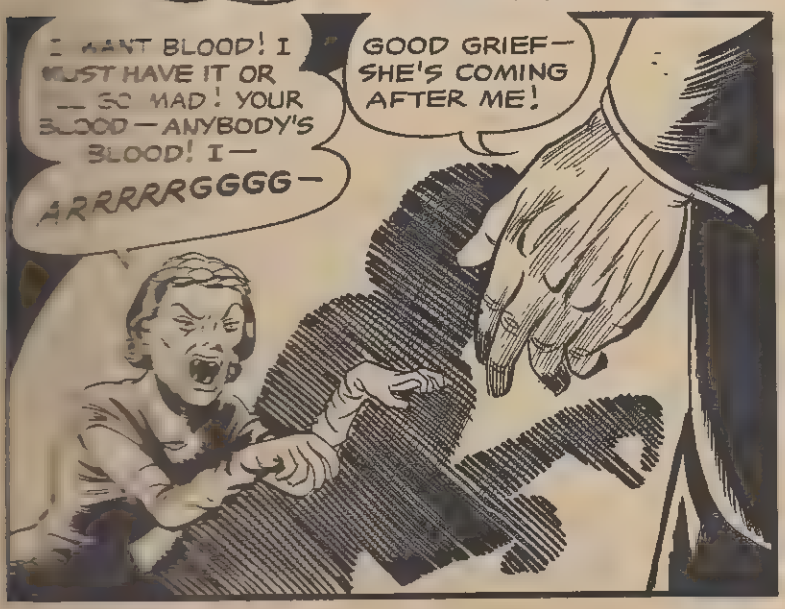


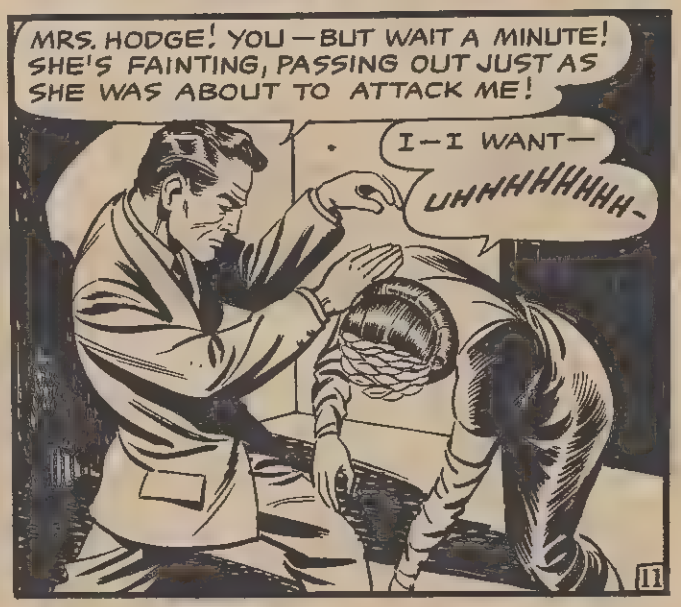

HELLO, MRS. HODGE! COME IN, PLEASE!
JUST MAKE YOURSELF COMFORTABLE AND WE'LL HAVE A LITTLE CHAT!
THANK YOU, DOCTOR! I DO HOPE YOU CAN HELP ME!

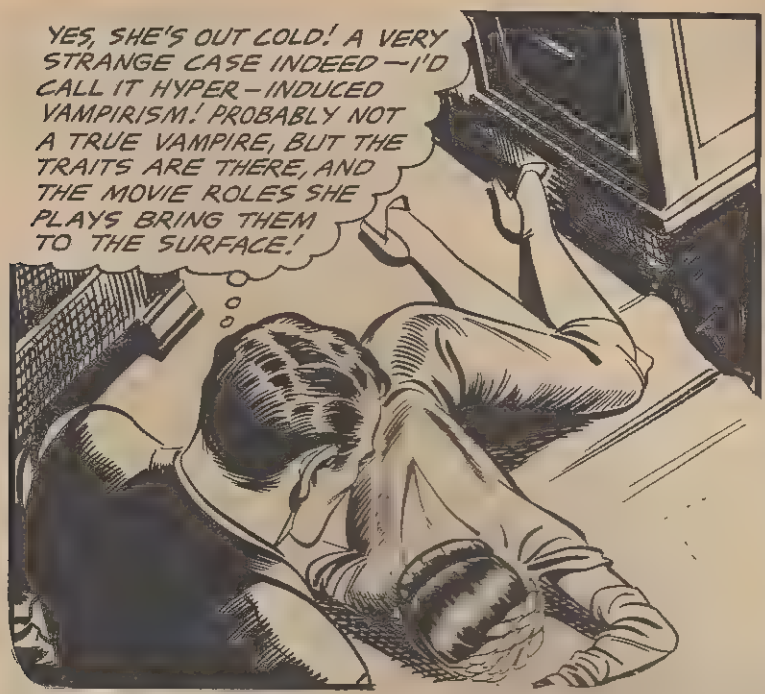
IT TOOK A LOT OF COURAGE TO COME HERE, DOCTOR! I HAD GREAT DIFFICULTY IN TAKING THIS STEP!
SUPPOSE YOU TELL ME ABOUT IT! JUST WHAT IS IT THAT TROUBLES YOU?

WELL, AS YOU MAY KNOW, I AM IN PICTURES! AND LATELY I'VE BECOME TYPE CAST—THEY SEEM TO LET ME PLAY NOTHING BUT HORROR ROLES! I'VE BEEN A VAMPIRE IN MY LAST FIVE PICTURES! AND...

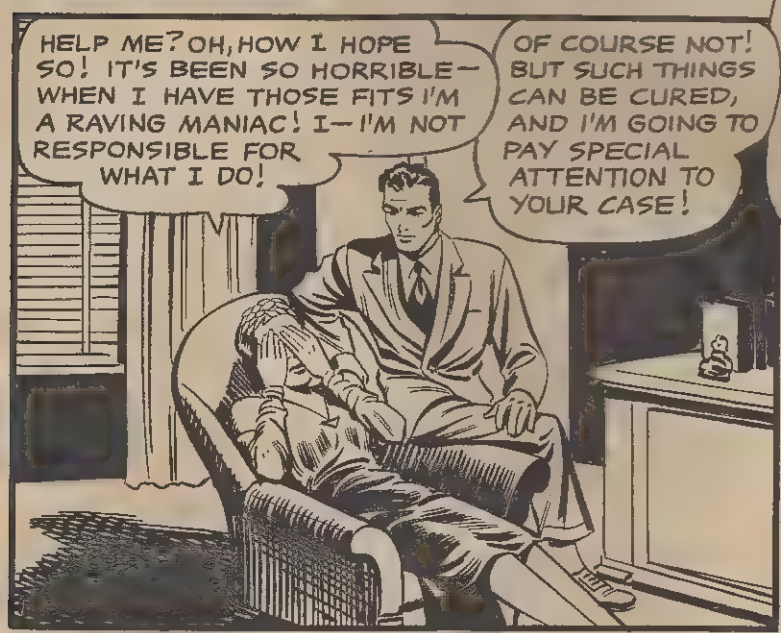

SUDDENLY THERE IS A HORRIBLE TRANSFORMATION IN THE WOMAN...
GREAT SCOTT—YOUR FACE! Y-YOU'RE CHANGING...
YES—NOW YOU SEE! I—(UGH)—KEEP CHANGING INTO A—(GASP)—VAMPIRE! A REAL VAMPIRE! AND THEN I WANT...


I WANT BLOOD! I MUST HAVE IT OR I'LL GO MAD! YOUR BLOOD—ANYBODY'S BLOOD! I—ARRRRRGGGG—
GOOD GRIEF—SHE'S COMING AFTER ME!

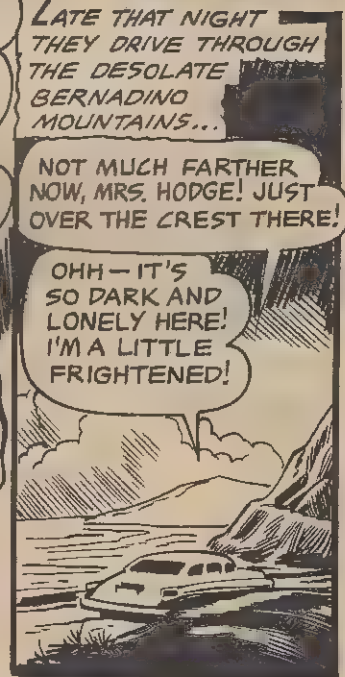

MRS. HODGE! YOU—BUT WAIT A MINUTE! SHE'S FAINTING, PASSING OUT JUST AS SHE WAS ABOUT TO ATTACK ME!
I—I WANT—
UHHHHHHHH-

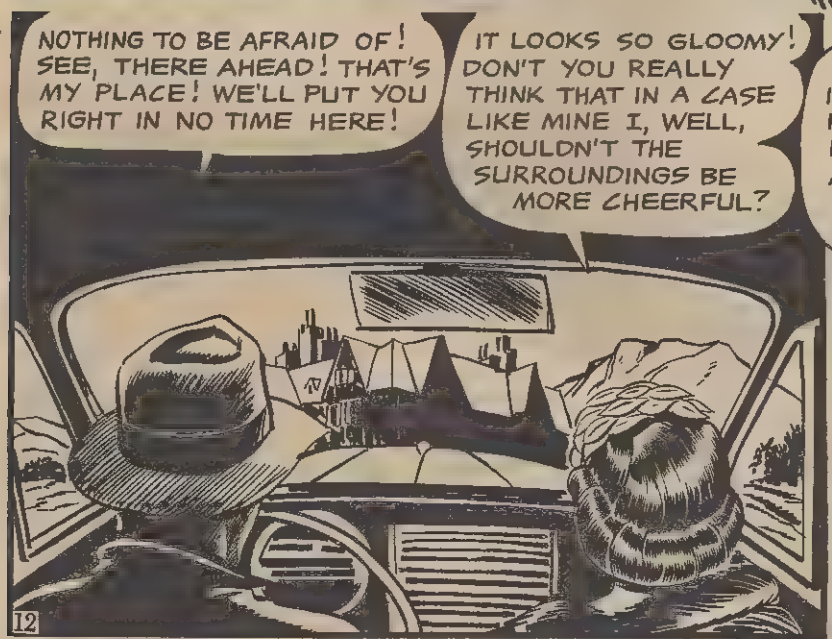

YES, SHE'S OUT COLD! A VERY STRANGE CASE INDEED—I'D CALL IT HYPER-INDUCED VAMPIRISM! PROBABLY NOT A TRUE VAMPIRE, BUT THE TRAITS ARE THERE, AND THE MOVIE ROLES SHE PLAYS BRING THEM TO THE SURFACE!

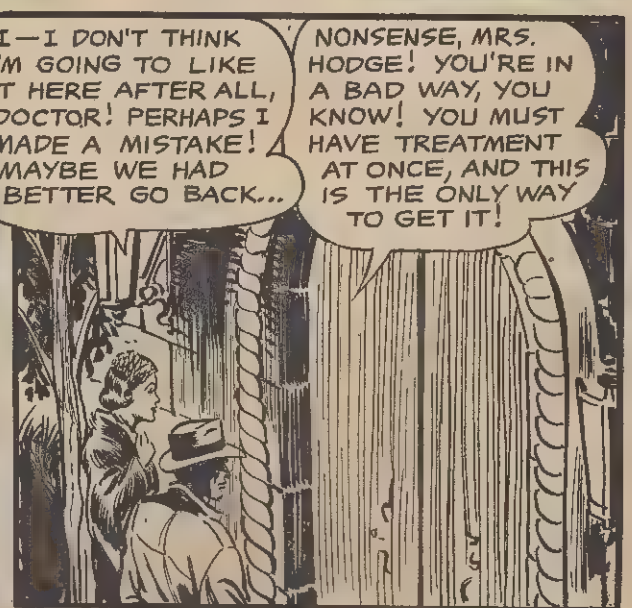
LATER...
I—WHERE—OH, I KNOW! IT—IT HAPPENED AGAIN!
YES MRS HODGE. BUT DON'T WORRY! TRY TO REMAIN CALM! I THINK I CAN HELP YOU!

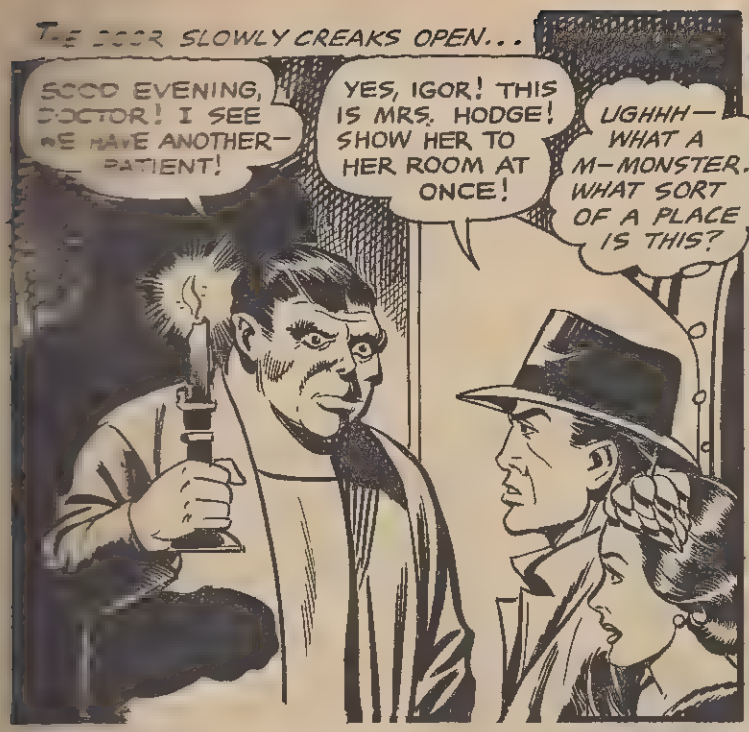

HELP ME? OH, HOW I HOPE SO! IT'S BEEN SO HORRIBLE—WHEN I HAVE THOSE FITS I'M A RAVING MANIAC! I—I'M NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR WHAT I DO!
OF COURSE NOT! BUT SUCH THINGS CAN BE CURED, AND I'M GOING TO PAY SPECIAL ATTENTION TO YOUR CASE!

BUT THE CURE WILL BE LONG AND EXPENSIVE! AND YOU'LL REQUIRE ABSOLUTE REST AND QUIET! SO I'M GOING TO TAKE YOU TO A LITTLE PRIVATE SANITARIUM OF MINE! FAR AWAY FROM THE CITY!


LATE THAT NIGHT THEY DRIVE THROUGH THE DESOLATE BERNADINO MOUNTAINS...
NOT MUCH FARTHER NOW, MRS. HODGE! JUST OVER THE CREST THERE!
OHH—IT'S SO DARK AND LONELY HERE! I'M A LITTLE FRIGHTENED!

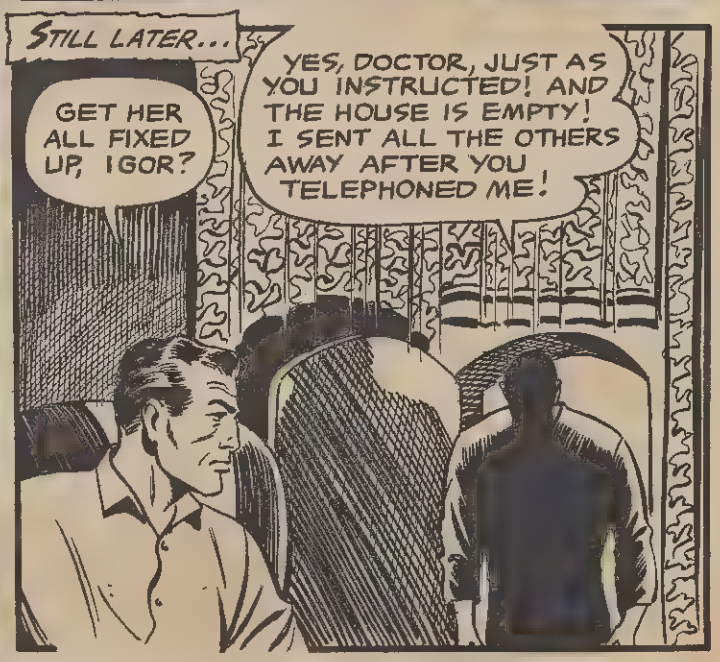

NOTHING TO BE AFRAID OF! SEE, THERE AHEAD! THAT'S MY PLACE! WE'LL PUT YOU RIGHT IN NO TIME HERE!
IT LOOKS SO GLOOMY! DON'T YOU REALLY THINK THAT IN A CASE LIKE MINE I, WELL, SHOULDN'T THE SURROUNDINGS BE MORE CHEERFUL?

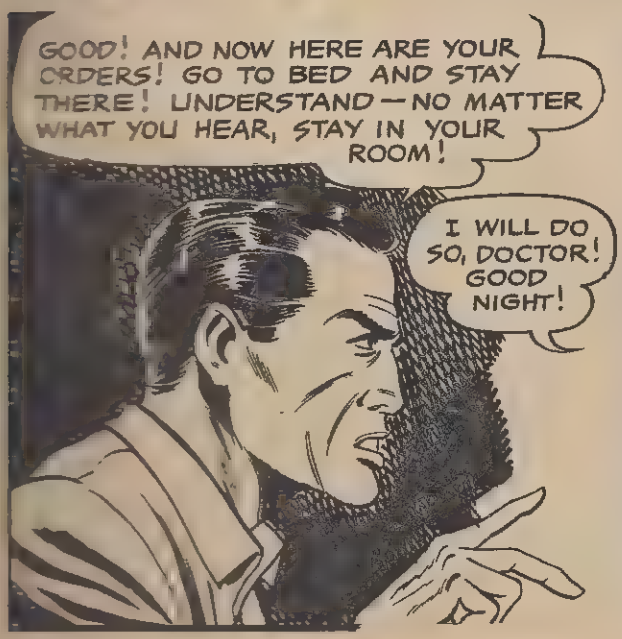

I—I DON'T THINK I'M GOING TO LIKE IT HERE AFTER ALL, DOCTOR! PERHAPS I MADE A MISTAKE! MAYBE WE HAD BETTER GO BACK...
NONSENSE, MRS. HODGE! YOU'RE IN A BAD WAY, YOU KNOW! YOU MUST HAVE TREATMENT AT ONCE, AND THIS IS THE ONLY WAY TO GET IT!

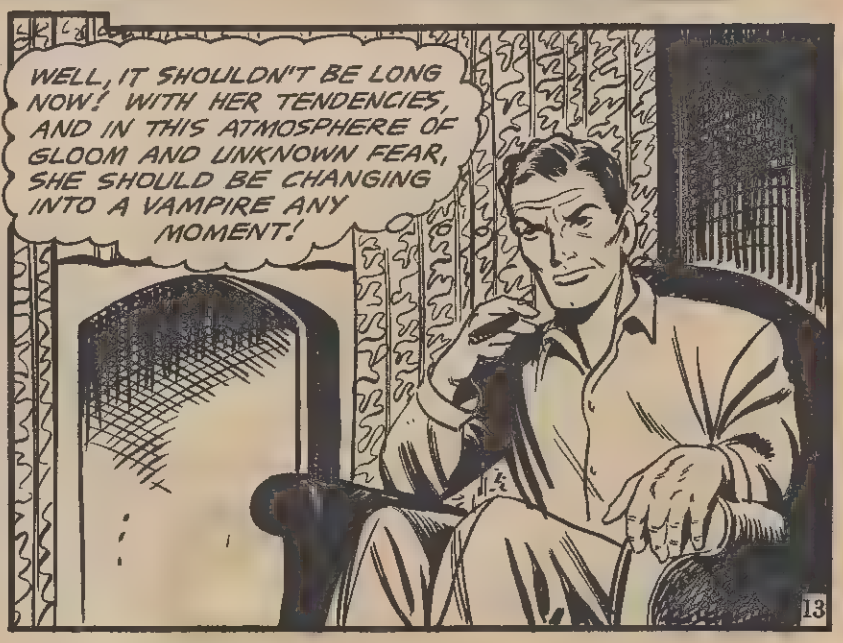

THE DOOR SLOWLY CREAKS OPEN...
GOOD EVENING, DOCTOR! I SEE WE HAVE ANOTHER—PATIENT!
YES, IGOR! THIS IS MRS. HODGE! SHOW HER TO HER ROOM AT ONCE!
UGHHH—WHAT A M—MONSTER! WHAT SORT OF A PLACE IS THIS?

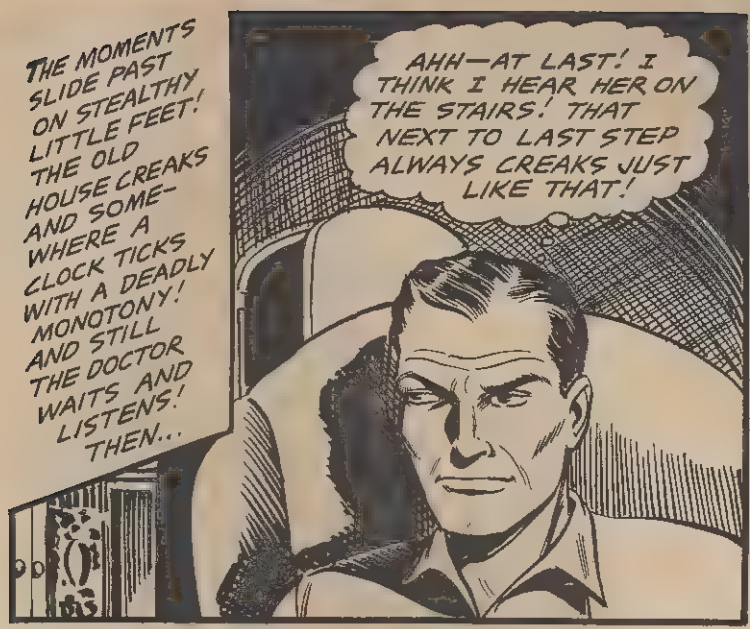
GOOD NIGHT, MRS. HODGE! SEE YOU IN THE MORNING!
THIS WAY, PLEASE! YOU'RE ON THE TOP FLOOR!
GOOD N—NIGHT, DOCTOR!

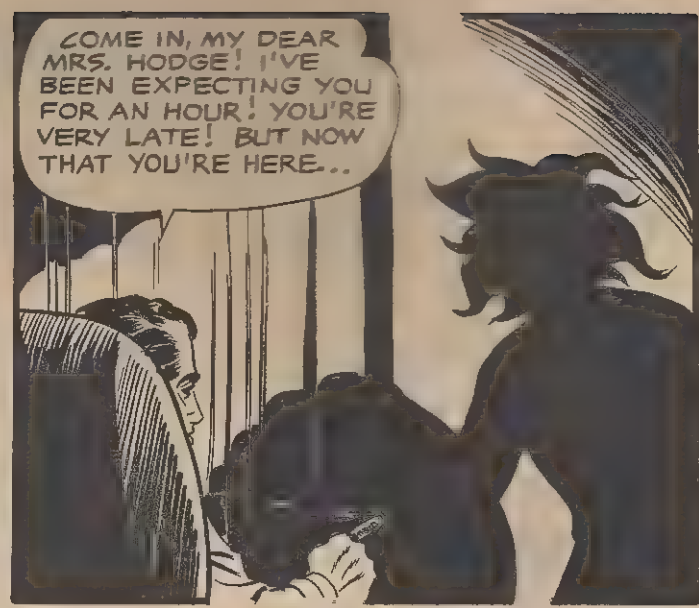
LATER, AS THE DOCTOR SITS IN HIS STUDY...
SEE HER IN THE MORNING, EH? HAH—HAH! UNLESS I MISS MY GUESS, I'LL SEE HER LONG BEFORE MORNING!

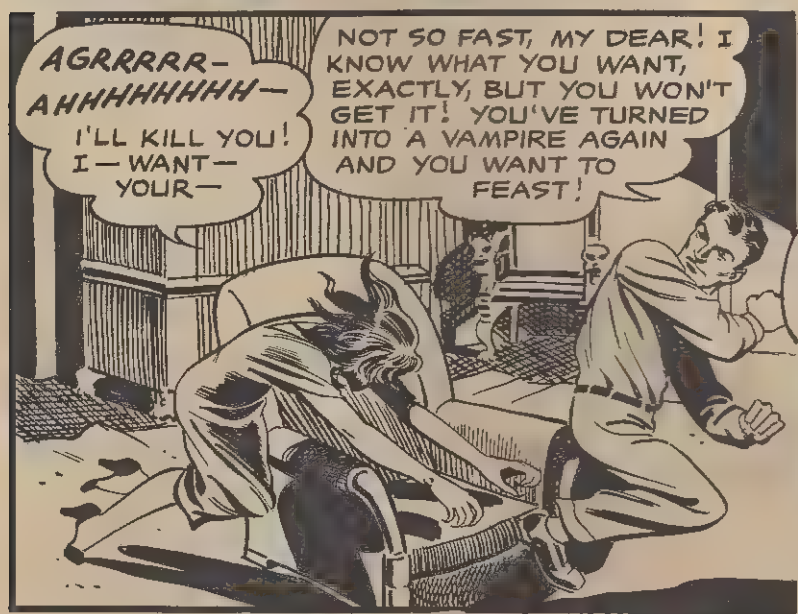

STILL LATER...
GET HER ALL FIXED UP, IGOR?
YES, DOCTOR, JUST AS YOU INSTRUCTED! AND THE HOUSE IS EMPTY! I SENT ALL THE OTHERS AWAY AFTER YOU TELEPHONED ME!


GOOD! AND NOW HERE ARE YOUR ORDERS! GO TO BED AND STAY THERE! UNDERSTAND—NO MATTER WHAT YOU HEAR, STAY IN YOUR ROOM!
I WILL DO SO, DOCTOR! GOOD NIGHT!

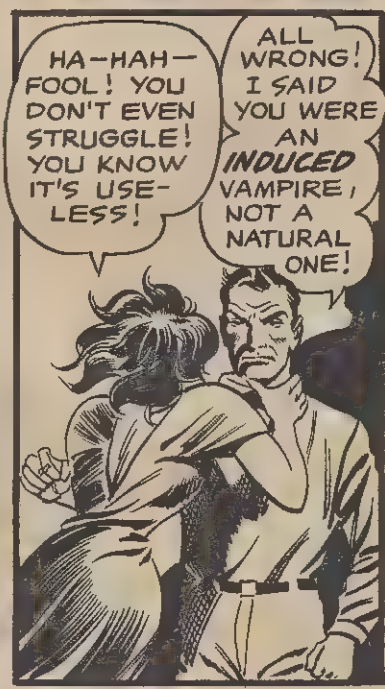

WELL, IT SHOULDN'T BE LONG NOW! WITH HER TENDENCIES, AND IN THIS ATMOSPHERE OF GLOOM AND UNKNOWN FEAR, SHE SHOULD BE CHANGING INTO A VAMPIRE ANY MOMENT!

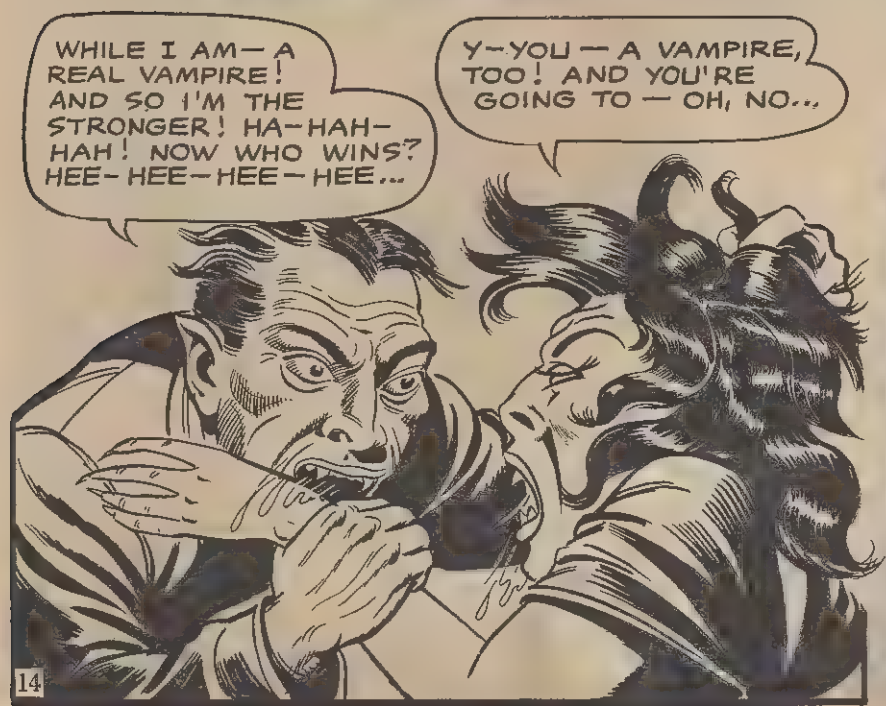

THE MOMENTS SLIDE PAST ON STEALTHY LITTLE FEET! THE OLD HOUSE CREAKS AND SOMEWHERE A CLOCK TICKS WITH A DEADLY MONOTONY! AND STILL THE DOCTOR WAITS AND LISTENS! THEN...
AHH—AT LAST! I THINK I HEAR HER ON THE STAIRS! THAT NEXT TO LAST STEP ALWAYS CREAKS JUST LIKE THAT!


COME IN, MY DEAR MRS. HODGE! I'VE BEEN EXPECTING YOU FOR AN HOUR! YOU'RE VERY LATE! BUT NOW THAT YOU'RE HERE...


AGRRRRR—AHHHHHHHH—
I'LL KILL YOU! I—WANT—YOUR—
NOT SO FAST, MY DEAR! I KNOW WHAT YOU WANT, EXACTLY, BUT YOU WON'T GET IT! YOU'VE TURNED INTO A VAMPIRE AGAIN AND YOU WANT TO FEAST!

I'LL GET IT, TOO! OH, HOW MY FANGS WANT TO BE AT YOUR THROAT! YOU WON'T ESCAPE ME THIS TIME!
THEN COME CLOSER—A LITTLE CLOSER!

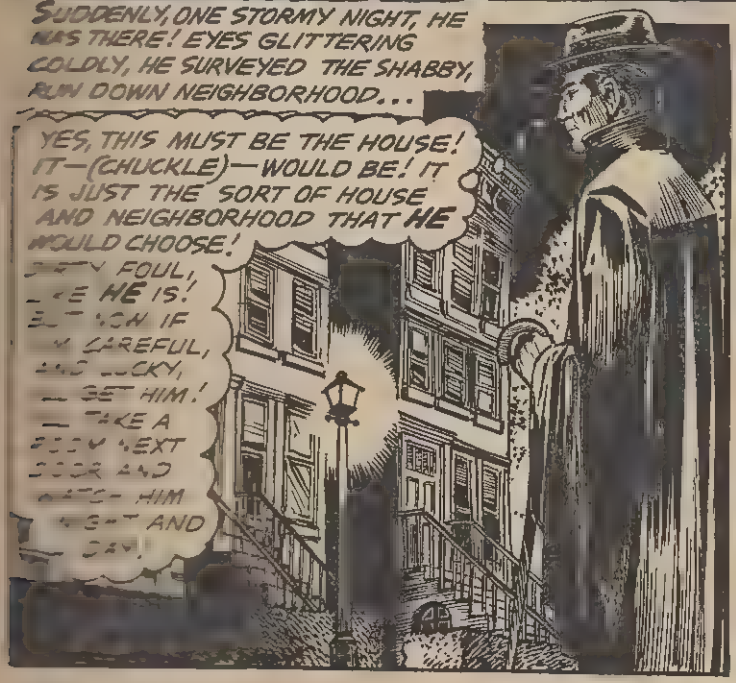

HA—HAH—FOOL! YOU DON'T EVEN STRUGGLE! YOU KNOW IT'S USELESS!
ALL WRONG! I SAID YOU WERE AN INDUCED VAMPIRE, NOT A NATURAL ONE!

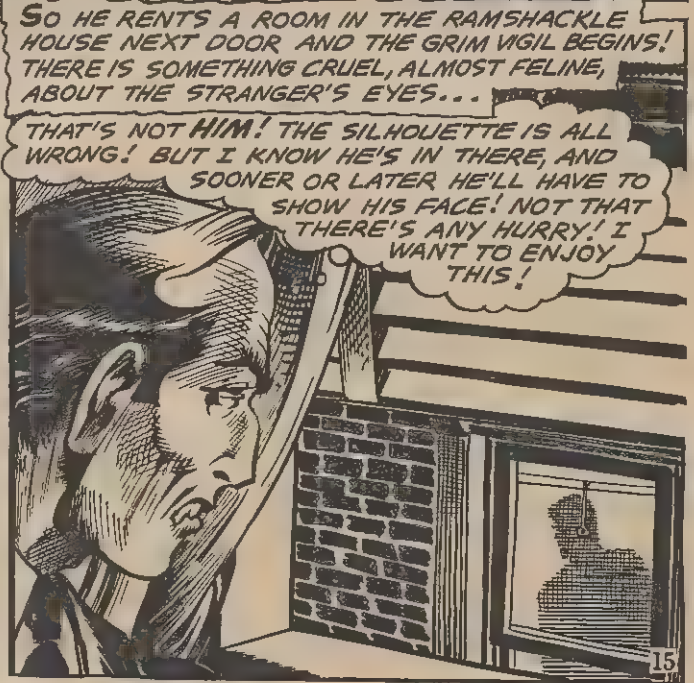

WHILE I AM—A REAL VAMPIRE! AND SO I'M THE STRONGER! HA—HAH—HAH! NOW WHO WINS? HEE—HEE—HEE—HEE...
Y—YOU—A VAMPIRE, TOO! AND YOU'RE GOING TO—OH, NO...

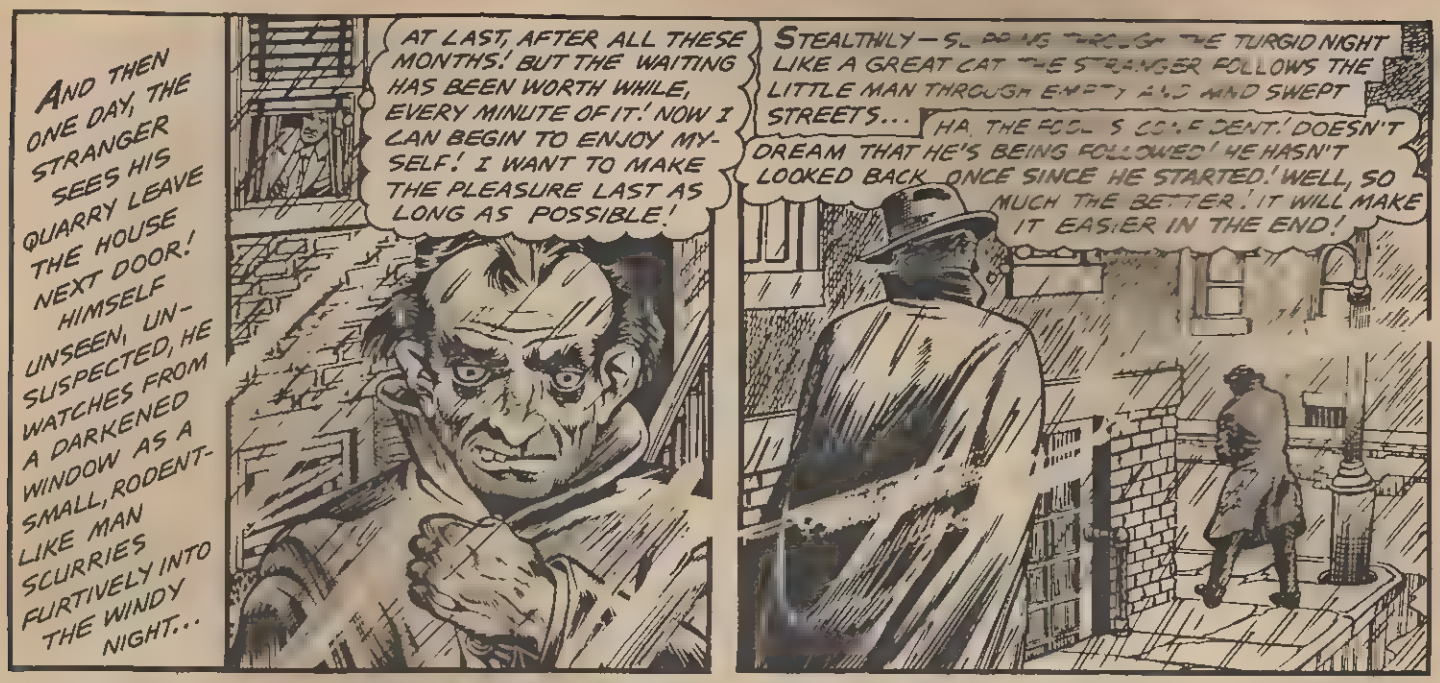
OH, YES! HO—HO—HO—HO—HO! AND NOW, MY DEAR...
EEEEEEKKK—OHHHHH—AHHHHHH—
The End

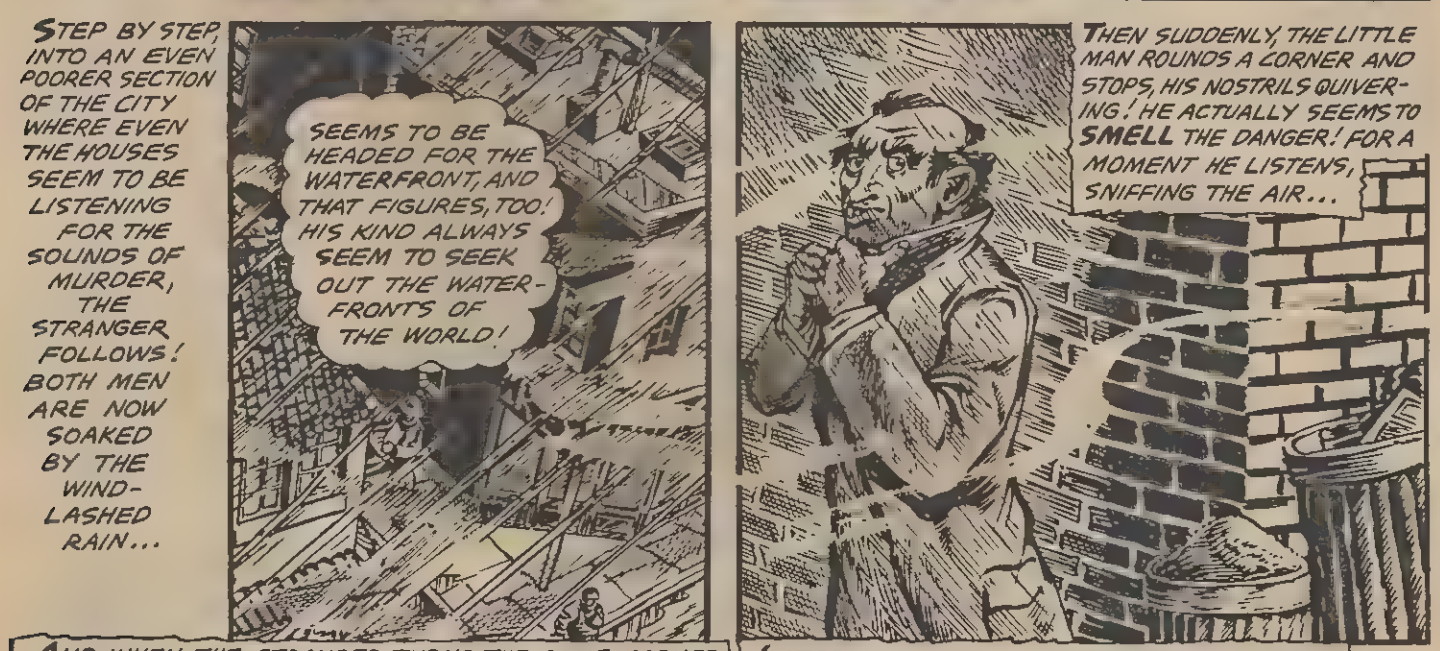
WHAT STRANGE AND TERRIBLE MISSION BROUGHT THE SINISTER STRANGER TO TOWN? WHO WAS HE, WHENCE DID HE COME, WHAT DID HE WANT? BUT THE STRANGER WASN'T TALKING—HE KEPT TO HIMSELF, ALWAYS WATCHFUL, ALWAYS WAITING! TALL, GRIM, AUSTERE, THE PARCHMENT OF HIS FACE AS YELLOW AS AN ANCIENT SKULL, HE WAS A MAN WHO WAS DEDICATED TO **DEATH!** NIGHT AFTER NIGHT HE FREQUENTED THE SORDID PARTS OF THE CITY, THE STINKING, GARBAGE STREWN STREETS WHERE THE RATS, HUMAN AND OTHERWISE, PROWLED IN A DEADLY SEARCH FOR PREY! THEN ONE BLEAK NIGHT, THE STRANGER FOUND WHAT HE SOUGHT AND, AT LAST, HE KEPT HIS **GRIM APPOINTMENT...**

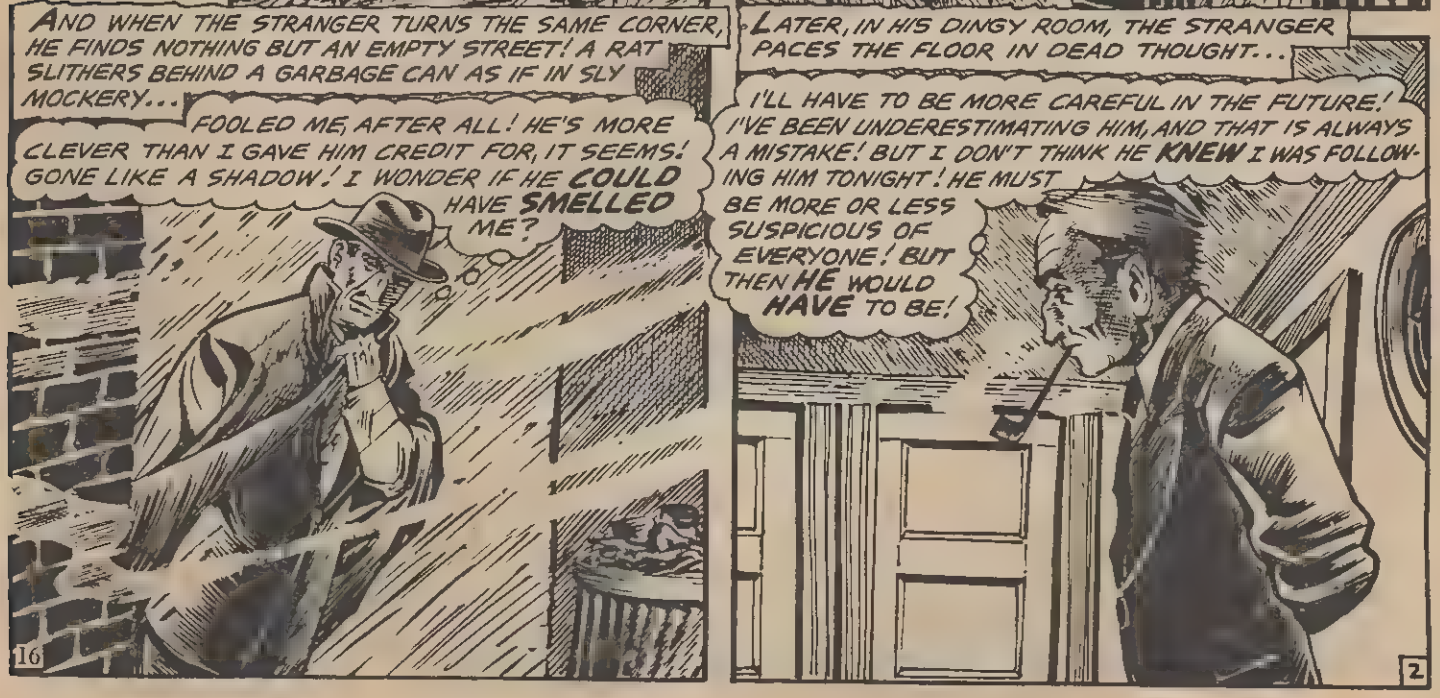
FANGS of FEAR



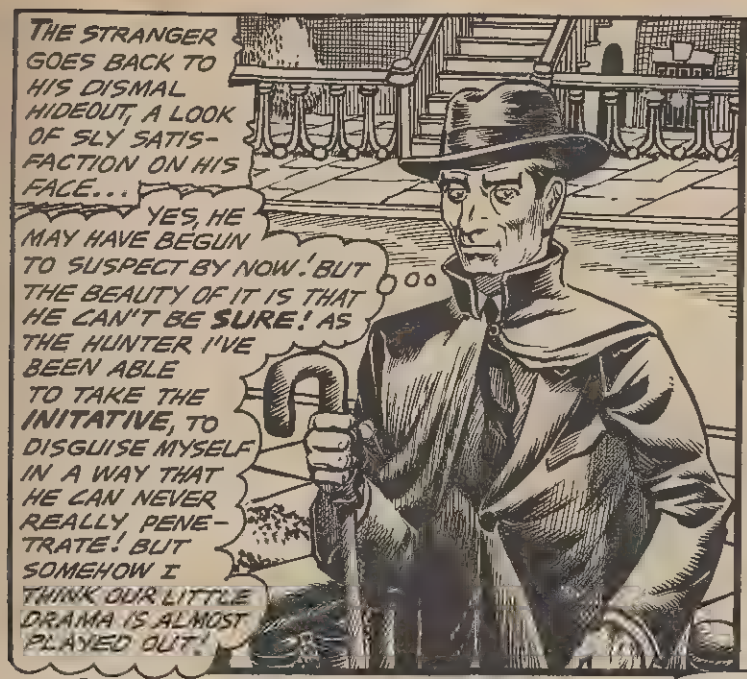


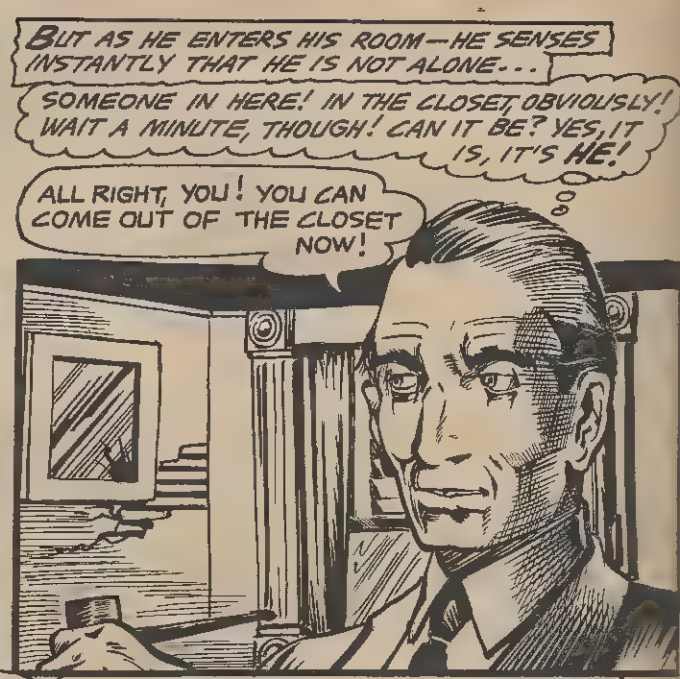

AND THEN ONE DAY, THE STRANGER SEES HIS QUARRY LEAVE THE HOUSE NEXT DOOR! HIMSELF UNSEEN, UNSUSPECTED, HE WATCHES FROM A DARKENED WINDOW AS A SMALL, RODENT-LIKE MAN SCURRIES FURTIVELY INTO THE WINDY NIGHT...
AT LAST, AFTER ALL THESE MONTHS! BUT THE WAITING HAS BEEN WORTH WHILE, EVERY MINUTE OF IT! NOW I CAN BEGIN TO ENJOY MYSELF! I WANT TO MAKE THE PLEASURE LAST AS LONG AS POSSIBLE!
STEALTHILY — SLIPPING THROUGH THE TURGID NIGHT LIKE A GREAT CAT THE STRANGER FOLLOWS THE LITTLE MAN THROUGH EMPTY AND WIND SWEPT STREETS...
HA, THE FOOL IS CONFIDENT! DOESN'T DREAM THAT HE'S BEING FOLLOWED! HE HASN'T LOOKED BACK ONCE SINCE HE STARTED! WELL, SO MUCH THE BETTER! IT WILL MAKE IT EASIER IN THE END!

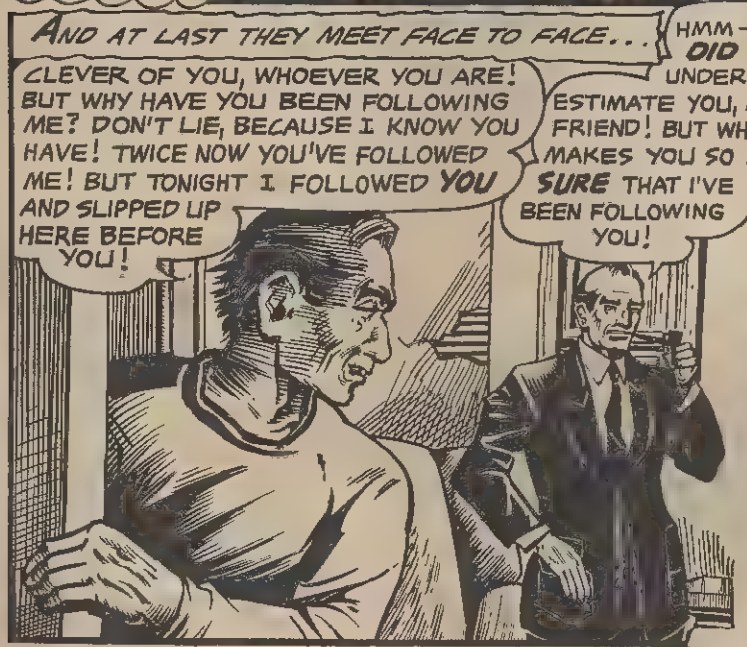

STEP BY STEP, INTO AN EVEN POORER SECTION OF THE CITY WHERE EVEN THE HOUSES SEEM TO BE LISTENING FOR THE SOUNDS OF MURDER, THE STRANGER FOLLOWS! BOTH MEN ARE NOW SOAKED BY THE WIND-LASHED RAIN...
SEEMS TO BE HEADED FOR THE WATERFRONT, AND THAT FIGURES, TOO! HIS KIND ALWAYS SEEM TO SEEK OUT THE WATERFRONTS OF THE WORLD!
THEN SUDDENLY, THE LITTLE MAN ROUNDS A CORNER AND STOPS, HIS NOSTRILS QUIVERING! HE ACTUALLY SEEMS TO SMELL THE DANGER! FOR A MOMENT HE LISTENS, SNIFFING THE AIR...

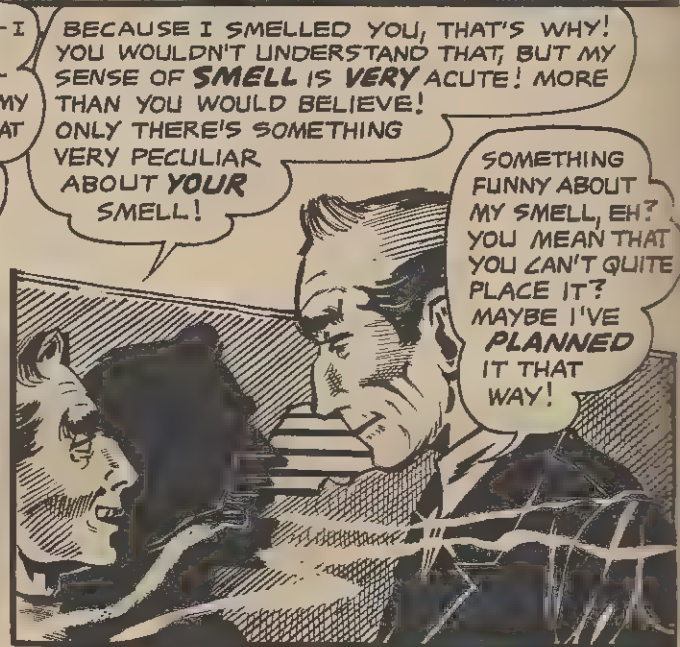

AND WHEN THE STRANGER TURNS THE SAME CORNER, HE FINDS NOTHING BUT AN EMPTY STREET! A RAT SLITHERS BEHIND A GARBAGE CAN AS IF IN SLY MOCKERY...
FOOLED ME, AFTER ALL! HE'S MORE CLEVER THAN I GAVE HIM CREDIT FOR, IT SEEMS! GONE LIKE A SHADOW! I WONDER IF HE COULD HAVE SMELLED ME?
LATER, IN HIS DINGY ROOM, THE STRANGER PACES THE FLOOR IN DEAD THOUGHT...
I'LL HAVE TO BE MORE CAREFUL IN THE FUTURE! I'VE BEEN UNDERESTIMATING HIM, AND THAT IS ALWAYS A MISTAKE! BUT I DON'T THINK HE KNEW I WAS FOLLOWING HIM TONIGHT! HE MUST BE MORE OR LESS SUSPICIOUS OF EVERYONE! BUT THEN HE WOULD HAVE TO BE!

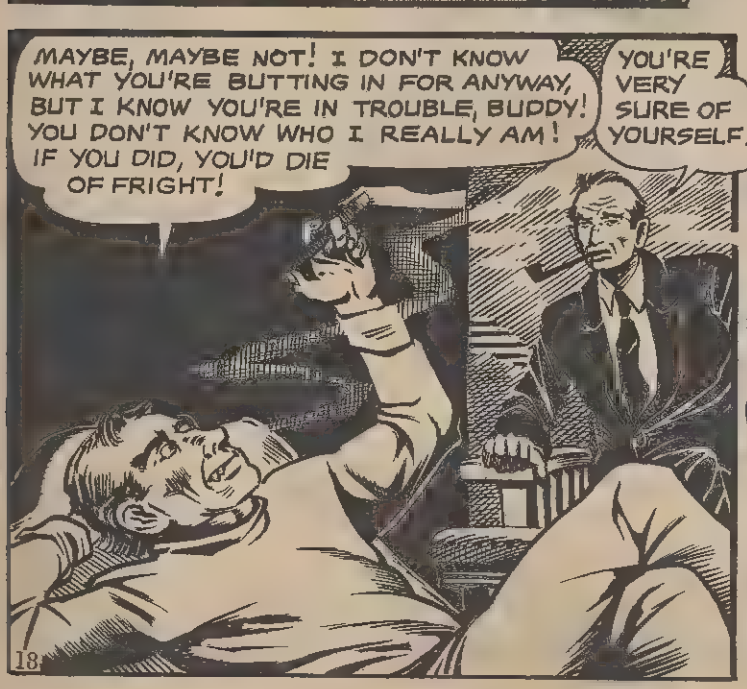
A FEW NIGHTS LATER, AND ONCE MORE THE CHASE BEGINS! THIS TIME THE STRANGER IS MORE CAREFUL! HE IS NO MORE THAN A SHADOW MINGLING WITH THE OTHER SINISTER SHADOWS...
HE DOESN'T SEEM TO BE SUSPICIOUS TONIGHT! AND IF HE WERE SUSPICIOUS, HE WOULD CERTAINLY HAVE TRIED TO LOSE ME BEFORE NOW! HAH—MAYBE THIS IS THE NIGHT!
SO, HE LEADS ME TO THIS OLD WAREHOUSE, AND NOW HE'S GOING DOWN THROUGH THAT TRAP-DOOR! HMM — WE MUST BE RIGHT OVER THE WATER! I CAN HEAR TUGS OUT IN THE BAY, AND THERE IS THE SOUND OF WATER WASHING AROUND PILES! YES, WE'RE GETTING CLOSE!
I WAS RIGHT! WE'RE DOWN UNDER THE DOCKS NOW! AND THERE HE IS, JUST CROSSING THAT OPEN WATER! MOVES QUIETLY, TOO! HAH-HAH—ALMOST AS QUIETLY AS I DO! NOW, MY FURTIVE LITTLE FRIEND, WE'RE GETTING CLOSE TO THE END OF THE TRAIL!
HE WENT INTO THAT DOOR JUST AHEAD! SO, UNLESS THERE'S ANOTHER DOOR LEADING OUT OF THERE, I'LL SEE WHAT HE'S UP TO AT LAST! I'D LIKE TO KILL HIM NOW, BUT THAT WOULDN'T BE WISE! I'VE GOT TO KNOW WHAT HIS PLANS ARE!
RATS! HUNDREDS OF RATS! WELL, THAT FIGURES! BUT I DIDN'T THINK HE WOULD BE SO BOLD, OR COME OUT IN THE OPEN SO! BUT AT LEAST NOW I KNOW—I WAS RIGHT ABOUT HIM!
BUT ONCE MORE THE LITTLE MAN SEEMS TO SCENT DANGER! HE SNIFFS THE AIR SUSPICIOUSLY, AS THE MURMURING OF DISTRAUGHT FRIENDS DISPERSES AND THERE'S A DEADLY SILENCE! THEN COMES THE FRIGHTENED SCAMPER OF RODENT FEET...
IN A FLASH, THE ROOM IS—EMPTY...
CLEVER, VERY CLEVER! THAT TIME HE WAS DEFINITELY ALARMED! HE'LL BE ON HIS GUARD FROM NOW ON! HMM—I WONDER HOW HE GOT OUT SO QUICKLY? SOME SECRET DOOR, NO DOUBT! AND FAST—FAST AS LIGHTNING!

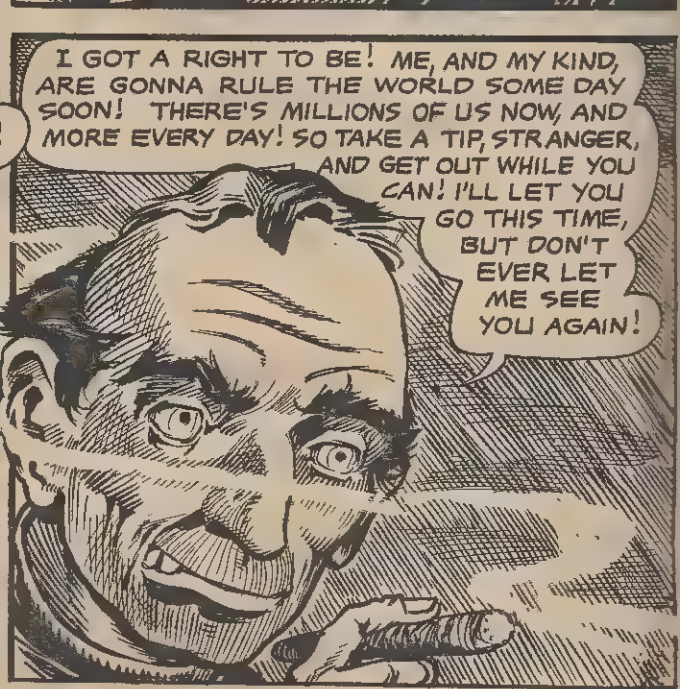

THE STRANGER GOES BACK TO HIS DISMAL HIDEOUT, A LOOK OF SLY SATISFACTION ON HIS FACE...
YES, HE MAY HAVE BEGUN TO SUSPECT BY NOW! BUT THE BEAUTY OF IT IS THAT HE CAN'T BE SURE! AS THE HUNTER I'VE BEEN ABLE TO TAKE THE INITATIVE, TO DISGUISE MYSELF IN A WAY THAT HE CAN NEVER REALLY PENETRATE! BUT SOMEHOW I THINK OUR LITTLE DRAMA IS ALMOST PLAYED OUT!


BUT AS HE ENTERS HIS ROOM—HE SENSES INSTANTLY THAT HE IS NOT ALONE...
SOMEONE IN HERE! IN THE CLOSET, OBVIOUSLY! WAIT A MINUTE, THOUGH! CAN IT BE? YES, IT IS, IT'S HE!
ALL RIGHT, YOU! YOU CAN COME OUT OF THE CLOSET NOW!


AND AT LAST THEY MEET FACE TO FACE...
CLEVER OF YOU, WHOEVER YOU ARE! BUT WHY HAVE YOU BEEN FOLLOWING ME? DON'T LIE, BECAUSE I KNOW YOU HAVE! TWICE NOW YOU'VE FOLLOWED ME! BUT TONIGHT I FOLLOWED YOU AND SLIPPED UP HERE BEFORE YOU!
HMM—I DID UNDERESTIMATE YOU, MY FRIEND! BUT WHAT MAKES YOU SO SURE THAT I'VE BEEN FOLLOWING YOU!


BECAUSE I SMELLED YOU, THAT'S WHY! YOU WOULDN'T UNDERSTAND THAT, BUT MY SENSE OF SMELL IS VERY ACUTE! MORE THAN YOU WOULD BELIEVE! ONLY THERE'S SOMETHING VERY PECULIAR ABOUT YOUR SMELL!
SOMETHING FUNNY ABOUT MY SMELL, EH? YOU MEAN THAT YOU CAN'T QUITE PLACE IT? MAYBE I'VE PLANNED IT THAT WAY!


MAYBE, MAYBE NOT! I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE BUTTING IN FOR ANYWAY, BUT I KNOW YOU'RE IN TROUBLE, BUDDY! YOU DON'T KNOW WHO I REALLY AM! IF YOU DID, YOU'D DIE OF FRIGHT!
YOU'RE VERY SURE OF YOURSELF!

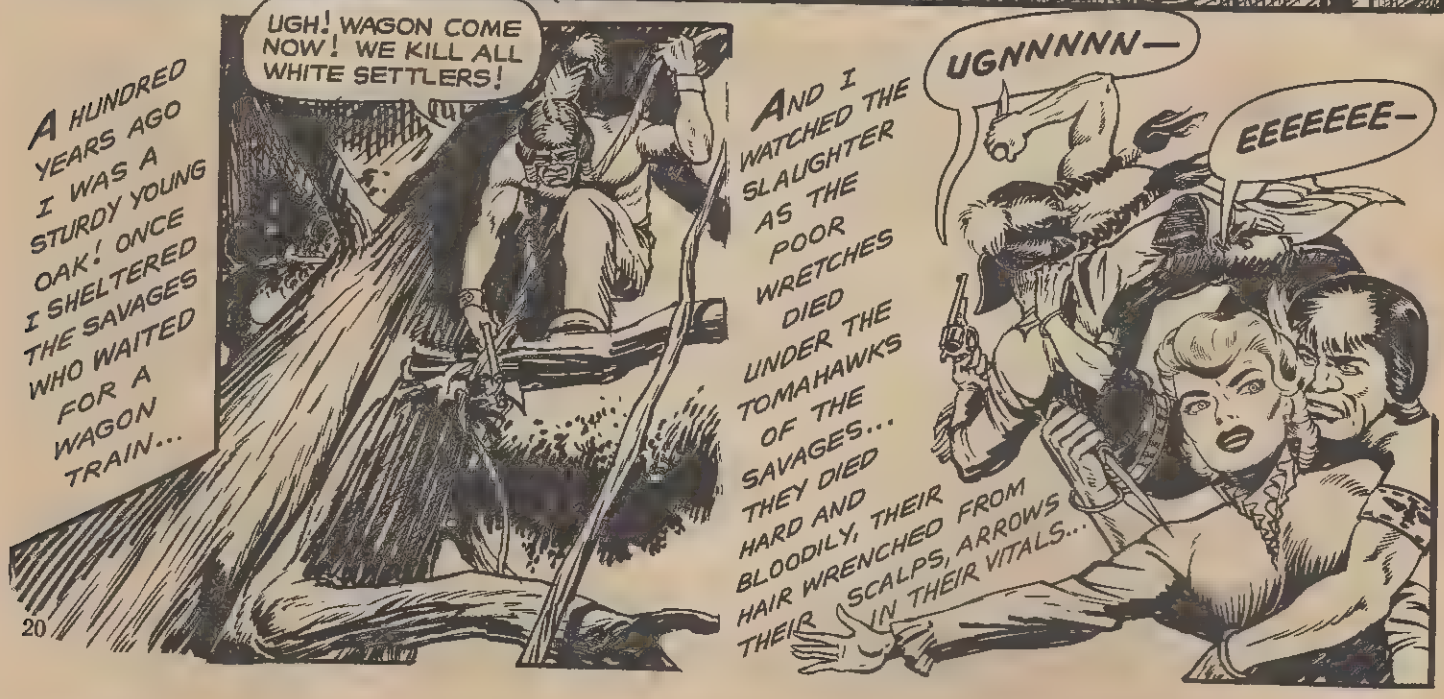

I GOT A RIGHT TO BE! ME, AND MY KIND, ARE GONNA RULE THE WORLD SOME DAY SOON! THERE'S MILLIONS OF US NOW, AND MORE EVERY DAY! SO TAKE A TIP, STRANGER, AND GET OUT WHILE YOU CAN! I'LL LET YOU GO THIS TIME, BUT DON'T EVER LET ME SEE YOU AGAIN!

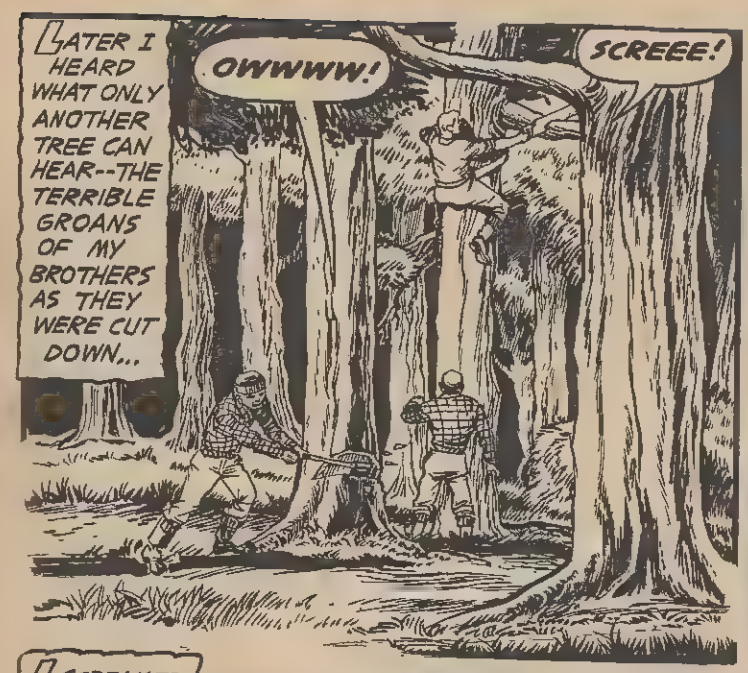
YOU ARE WRONG! YOU AND YOUR KIND WILL NEVER RULE THE WORLD WHILE I AM ALIVE! BECAUSE WE'LL KILL YOU AS FAST AS WE CAN! WE'LL HOLD YOU DOWN, AND, AT LAST WIPE YOU OUT!
HUH! YOU FOOL! SOMETHING AWFUL STRANGE ABOUT YOU! BUT YOU HAD YOUR CHANCE! NOW I'LL SHOW YOU WHO I AM!
I ALREADY KNOW!
YEAH? WELL, NOW YOU CAN BE SURE! BECAUSE I'M THE KING OF THE RATS—AND I'M GONNA GNAW ON YOU!
AND I, MY RAT FRIEND, AM THE KING OF THE CATS! I DISGUISED MY SMELL, BUT YOU COULDN'T HIDE YOURS!
THE FIGHT IS SWIFT AND DEADLY...
YORWWWW—
GRRRRRRRR—
ARRRHHHH—
SO, HE IS DEAD AT LAST! AFTER ALL THESE MONTHS, I HAVE FOUND AND KILLED HIM! MY JOB IS DONE, FOR NOW! BUT THERE ARE OTHER RAT KINGS IN OTHER PARTS OF THE WORLD! THERE WILL ALWAYS BE A NEW ONE, A SHARP-FANGED, LURKING GRAY RAT KING! MY SUBJECTS WILL HANDLE THE OTHERS BUT I MUST KILL THE KINGS...
AND SO THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER LEAVES THE SHABBY NEIGHBORHOOD AND VANISHES INTO THE NIGHT...
I MUST GO TO LONDON AT ONCE! THERE IS—BUSINESS TO ATTEND TO...
THE END.

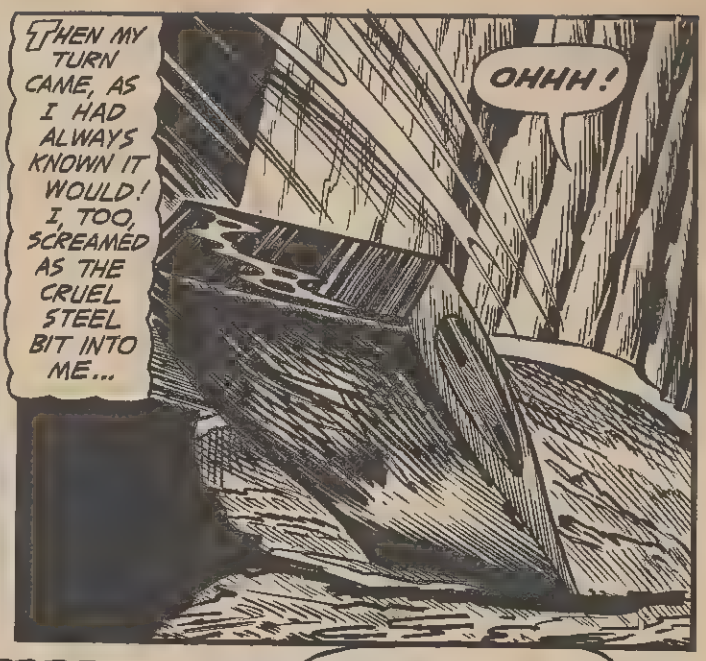
I, THE COFFIN

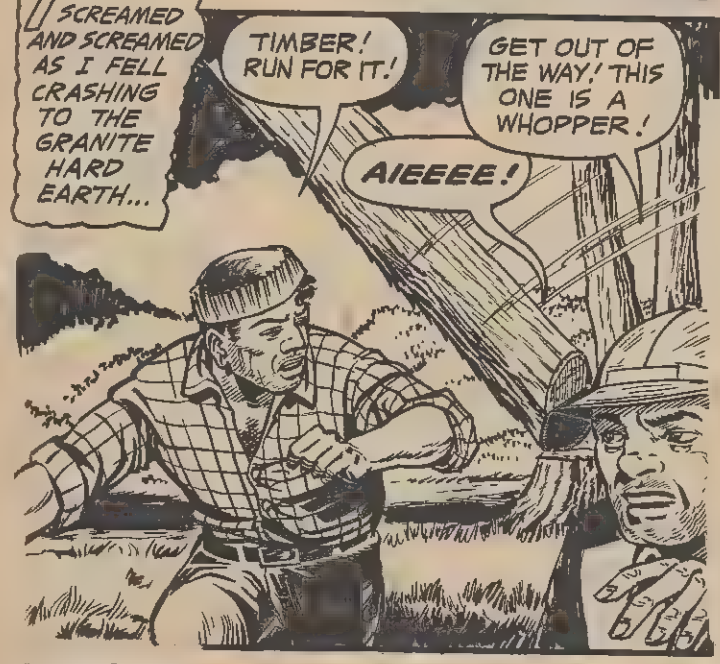
I AM A COFFIN, AND THIS IS MY STORY! A STORY OF PAIN AND PATIENCE, HORROR AND HAPPINESS, LIFE AND DEATH! I HAVE SEEN THE SEAMY SIDE OF LIFE AND —(CHUCKLE)— DEATH! I **KNOW** THE **UNKNOWABLE!** I HAVE BEEN WET WITH TEARS, AND FELT THE CRUEL SLITHER OF THE WORMS IN MY ENTRAILS! IN A WAY I AM **ALL** COFFINS, AND THUS I SPEAK FOR **ALL** COFFINS! YOU DO NOT NEED ME **NOW,** OR EVEN WANT ME AROUND, BUT YOU WILL SOME DAY! AND I'LL BE THERE! I'LL BE READY, WAITING— **FOR YOU...**

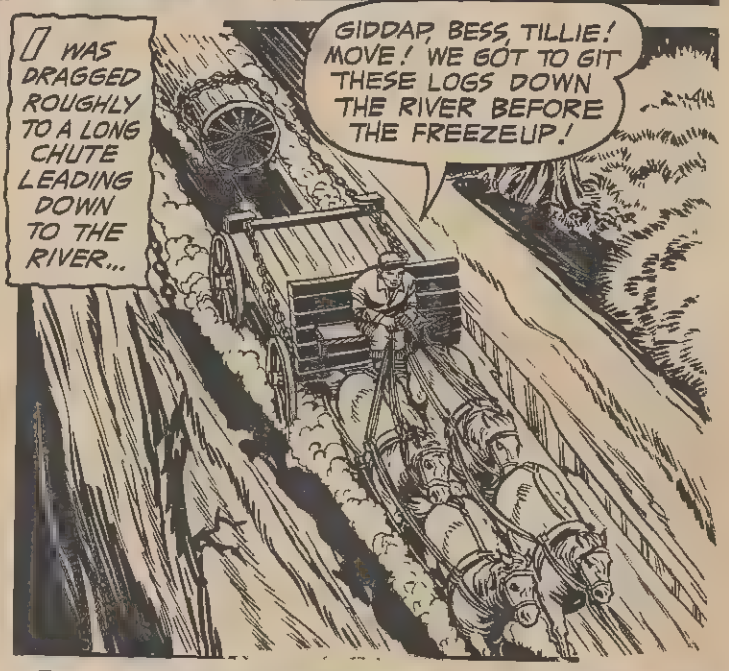
IS THIS YOU?

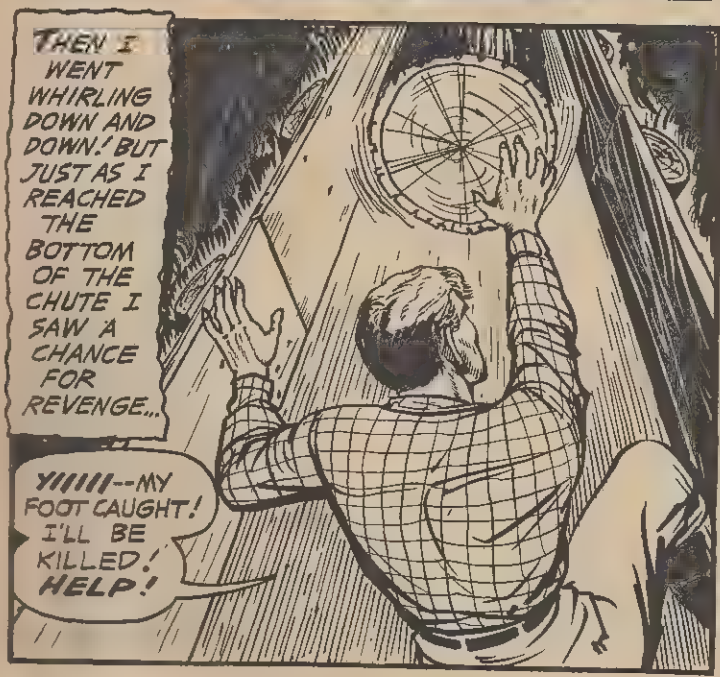


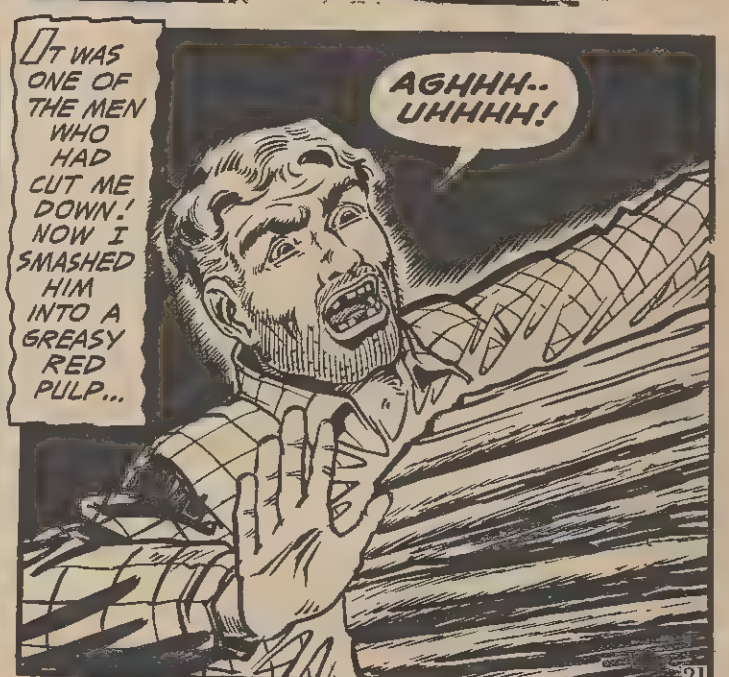

LATER I HEARD WHAT ONLY ANOTHER TREE CAN HEAR--THE TERRIBLE GROANS OF MY BROTHERS AS THEY WERE CUT DOWN...
OWWWW!
SCREEE!

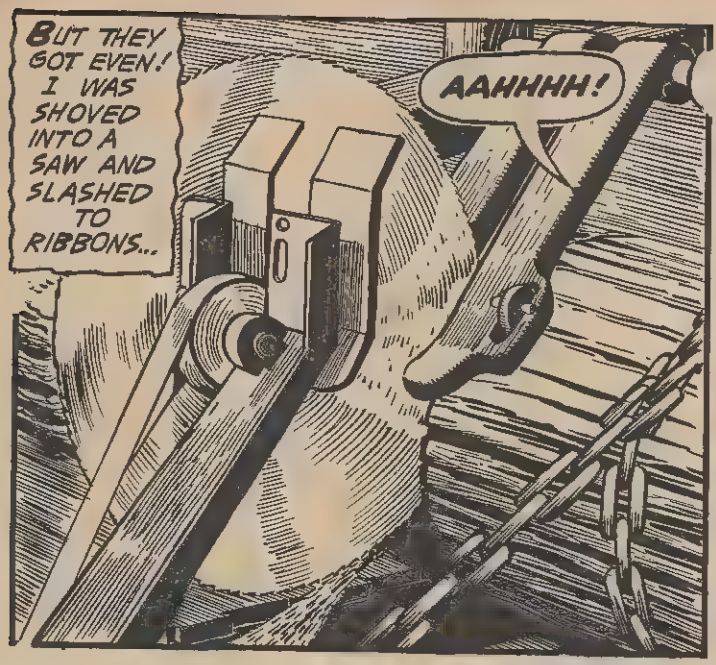

THEN MY TURN CAME, AS I HAD ALWAYS KNOWN IT WOULD! I, TOO, SCREAMED AS THE CRUEL STEEL BIT INTO ME...
OHHH!

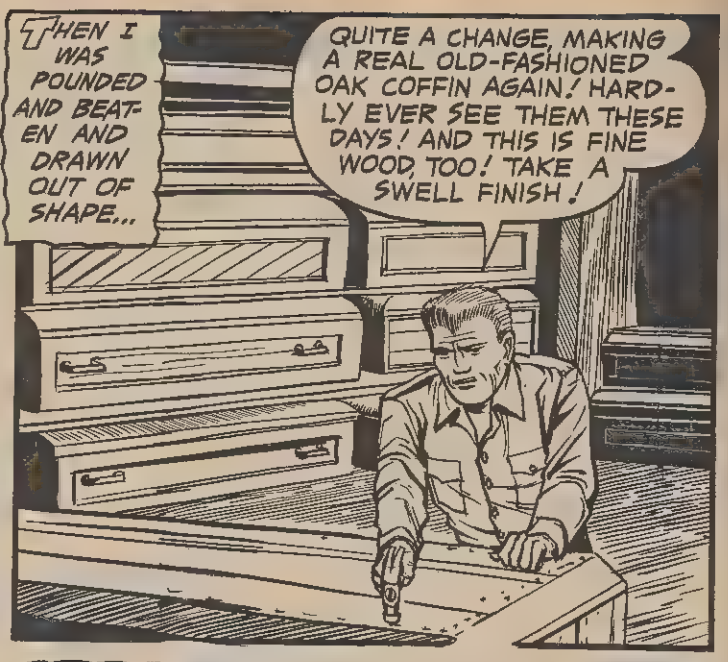

I SCREAMED AND SCREAMED AS I FELL CRASHING TO THE GRANITE HARD EARTH...
TIMBER! RUN FOR IT!
GET OUT OF THE WAY! THIS ONE IS A WHOPPER!
AIEEEE!


I WAS DRAGGED ROUGHLY TO A LONG CHUTE LEADING DOWN TO THE RIVER...
GIDDAP, BESS, TILLIE! MOVE! WE GOT TO GIT THESE LOGS DOWN THE RIVER BEFORE THE FREEZEUP!

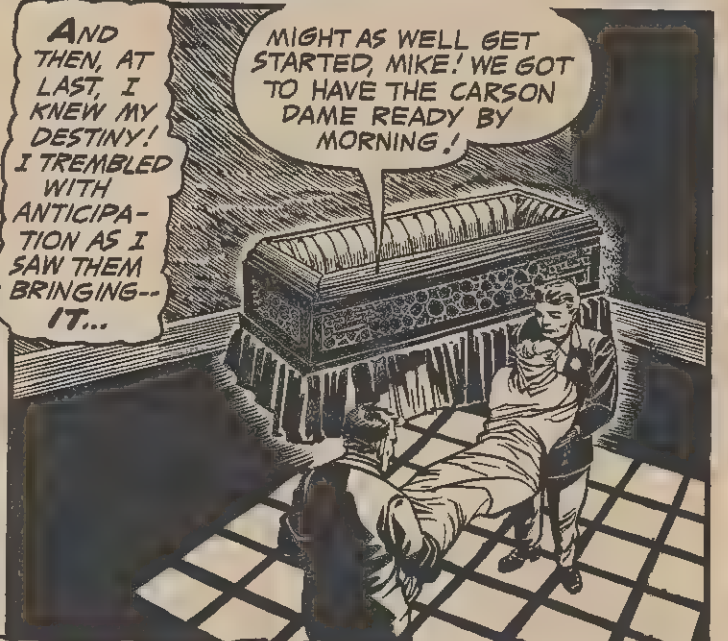

THEN I WENT WHIRLING DOWN AND DOWN! BUT JUST AS I REACHED THE BOTTOM OF THE CHUTE I SAW A CHANCE FOR REVENGE...
YIIIII--MY FOOT CAUGHT! I'LL BE KILLED! HELP!

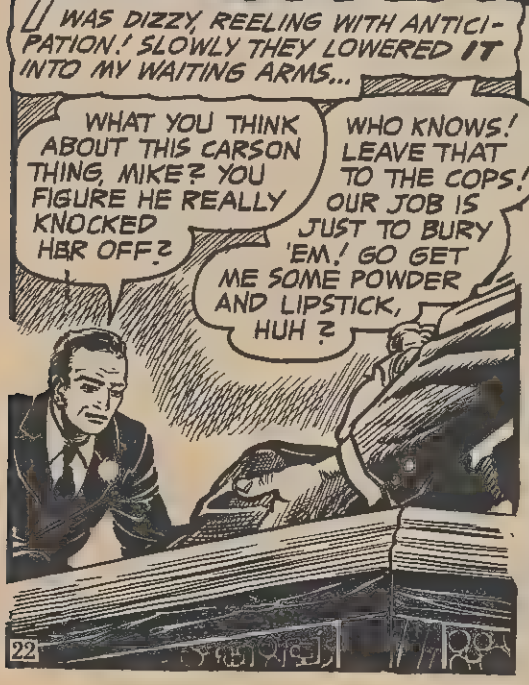

IT WAS ONE OF THE MEN WHO HAD CUT ME DOWN! NOW I SMASHED HIM INTO A GREASY RED PULP...
AGHHH--UHHHH!

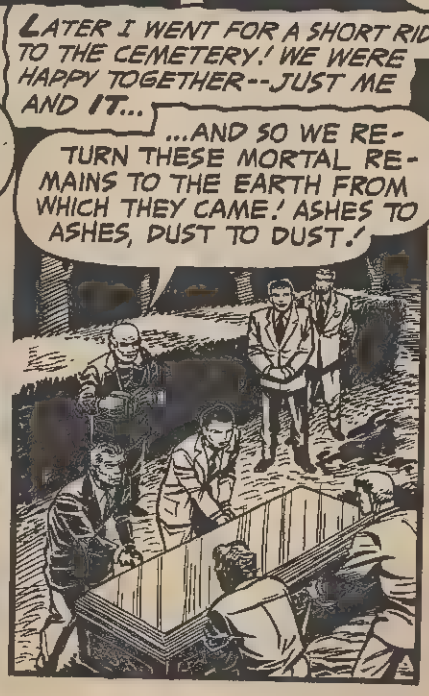

BUT THEY GOT EVEN! I WAS SHOVED INTO A SAW AND SLASHED TO RIBBONS...
AAHHHH!


THEN I WAS POUNDED AND BEATEN AND DRAWN OUT OF SHAPE...
QUITE A CHANGE, MAKING A REAL OLD-FASHIONED OAK COFFIN AGAIN! HARDLY EVER SEE THEM THESE DAYS! AND THIS IS FINE WOOD, TOO! TAKE A SWELL FINISH!

AND I DID TAKE A GOOD FINISH! I WAS POLISHED UNTIL I GLEAMED! THEN I WENT TO A MORTUARY, A DANK AND GLOOMY PLACE...
HOW ABOUT THIS ONE, SIR? MADE OF THE FINEST OAK! I KNOW YOU WANT YOUR DEAR DEPARTED WIFE TO HAVE THE BEST!
YES, OF COURSE! THAT ONE WILL DO VERY WELL! I'LL BUY IT!


AND THEN, AT LAST, I KNEW MY DESTINY! I TREMBLED WITH ANTICIPATION AS I SAW THEM BRINGING-- IT...
MIGHT AS WELL GET STARTED, MIKE! WE GOT TO HAVE THE CARSON DAME READY BY MORNING!


I WAS DIZZY, REELING WITH ANTICIPATION! SLOWLY THEY LOWERED IT INTO MY WAITING ARMS...
WHAT YOU THINK ABOUT THIS CARSON THING, MIKE? YOU FIGURE HE REALLY KNOCKED HER OFF?
WHO KNOWS! LEAVE THAT TO THE COPS! OUR JOB IS JUST TO BURY 'EM! GO GET ME SOME POWDER AND LIPSTICK, HUH?


LATER I WENT FOR A SHORT RIDE TO THE CEMETERY! WE WERE HAPPY TOGETHER--JUST ME AND IT...
...AND SO WE RETURN THESE MORTAL REMAINS TO THE EARTH FROM WHICH THEY CAME! ASHES TO ASHES, DUST TO DUST!

THE LITTLE CLODS OF DIRT, LIKE GENTLE RAIN, CAME PATTERING DOWN ON ME AND I KNEW THAT SOON WE WOULD BE ALONE...
WELL, THAT'S THAT! THE END OF THE CARSON CASE!

BUT EVEN NOW I WAS NOT TO BE LEFT AT PEACE! THE CARSON CASE, WHATEVER THAT WAS, WAS TO BE REOPENED! ONE DAY I WAS RUDELY PULLED FROM THE GRAVE...
LOOKS LIKE CARSON AIN'T GONNA GET AWAY WITH IT AFTER ALL! I THINK HE DID POISON HER!
MAYBE, MAYBE NOT! DON'T SEE WHY THEY DIDN'T DO THE AUTOPSY BEFORE AND SAVE US ALL THIS WORK!
THEY TOOK ME AND IT DOWN TO A POLICE LABORATORY! BY NOW I WAS FURIOUS! THEY THOUGHT THEY HAD BEEN INCONVENIENCED! HOW ABOUT ME?
OKAY, FELLAS, PUT IT OVER THERE ON THE TABLE! UGH--HOW I HATE THESE JOBS!
ME TOO! OUGHT TO BE AN EASIER WAY TO MAKE A LIVING!
QUIT COMPLAINING! THIS CORPSE AIN'T VERY HEAVY!
I HAD TO WATCH AS THEY SLASHED MY DEAR DEAD PARTNER WITH THEIR LONG CRUEL KNIVES...
HMM--WE'LL HAVE THE STOMACH OUT IN A MINUTE! WON'T TAKE LONG TO FIND OUT IF SHE WAS POISONED OR NOT!
I'LL GIVE FIVE TO THREE SHE WAS! THAT CARSON EVEN LOOKS LIKE A RAT!
YOU WIN! ARSENIC, SURE AS YOU'RE BORN! THIS WILL REALLY COOK CARSON'S GOOSE!
THEY IGNORED ME! A SUDDEN FEAR BEGAN TO GROW IN MY MIND--I WASN'T GOING TO GET MY BODY BACK...
WE BETTER MAKE OUR REPORT! AND KEEP THE BODY IN STORAGE UNTIL AFTER THIS IS ALL OVER!
YEAH! I'LL HAVE THE MEN TAKE THE COFFIN AWAY LATER!
I WAS TO BE TAKEN AWAY--EMPTY! BUT WHERE? THE NEXT DAY I FOUND OUT...
NICE BOX THAT CARSON DAME HAD! WONDER WHAT THEY'LL DO WITH IT?
LEAVE IT TO GATHER DUST, I GUESS! I HEAR SHE'S GETTING A NEW ONE!

I DID GATHER DUST! DAYS PASSED, WEEKS, MONTHS! THEN ONE DAY...

I TOLD YA THEY'D USE THIS COFFIN! HAH-HAH! THOSE GUYS AT THE STATE PRISON DON'T MISS A TRICK!

YEAH! PRETTY CUTE-- SAVES THE STATE SOME DOUGH, TOO! EVEN A PINE BOX COSTS MONEY!

I WAS ALIVE AGAIN, DOING SOMETHING! A DELICIOUS SHIVER OF ANTICIPATION RAN OVER ME AS WE STOPPED AT A HUGE IRON GATE...

HERE YOU ARE, LARRY! WE'RE IN TIME?

NO CARES! THE CUSTOMER-- CHUCKLE-- AIN'T GOING ANYWHERE!

HURRY! THEY'RE GIVING IT TO HIM ANY MINUTE NOW!

SUDDENLY THE MEN STOPPED! I COULD FEEL THEM GROW TENSE! THEIR HANDS, ON ME, WERE SLIPPERY WITH SWEAT! BUT WHAT WAS HAPPENING?

THERE! SEE THOSE LIGHTS DIM! THAT'S IT!

G-GOSH, THAT POOR DEVIL! RIDING THE THUNDERBOLT!

GIVES ME A C-- CREEPY FEELING!

THEN I FORGOT THEM! I WAS HAPPY AGAIN! THEY WERE GIVING ME ANOTHER BODY!

SOME TWIST, HUH? THE GUY MURDERS HIS WIFE, BUYS HER A SWELL COFFIN, AND IN THE END...

HE USES IT! WELL, THERE WASN'T ANY SENSE IN THROWING IT AWAY, AND HER BROTHER WOULDN'T LET THEM BURY HER IN IT AGAIN, JUST BECAUSE CARSON BOUGHT IT!

AS WE DROVE TO ANOTHER GRAVEYARD, WITH MY NEW BODY NESTLED CLOSE TO MY SATIN LINING, I UNDERSTOOD AT LAST! MY NEW BODY WAS THAT OF CARSON HIMSELF...

ONCE AGAIN I FELT EARTH FALLING ON ME! NOW, AT LAST, I WAS TO BE LEFT IN PEACE, FOR ALL ETERNITY, WITH IT...

YA KNOW, JAKE, I JUST THOUGHT OF SOMETHING FUNNY!

THEN TELL ME! I NEED CHEERING UP AFTER WHAT I SEEN TODAY!

AH, I DON'T MEAN FUNNY LIKE THAT! BUT DID YA EVER THINK ABOUT A COFFIN---

NOT ANYMORE THAN I CAN HELP! COFFINS IS FOR DEAD PEOPLE! AND I AIN'T READY FOR MINE YET! IF THAT'S YOUR IDEA OF FUNNY-- SHUT UP!

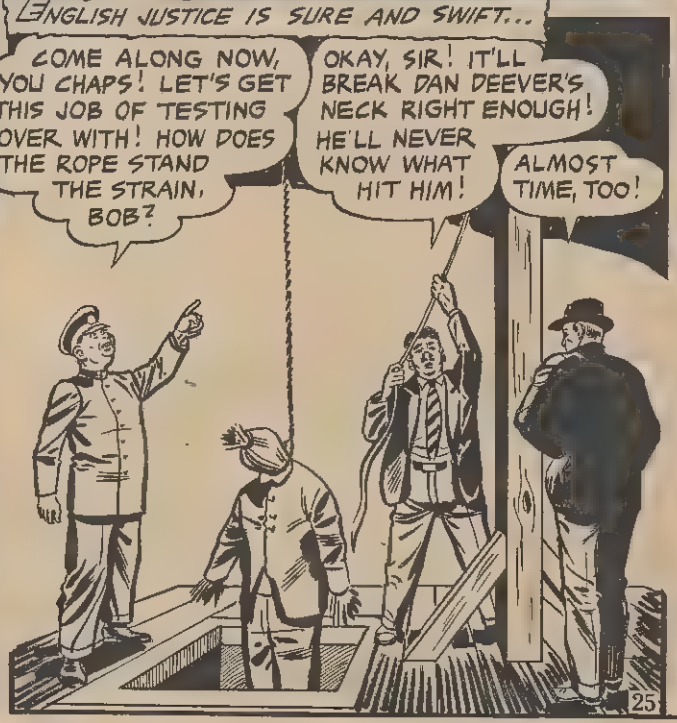
BUT SUPPOSE A COFFIN WAS ALIVE, AND COULD TALK! BROTHER--SOME OF THE THINGS IT COULD TELL YA!

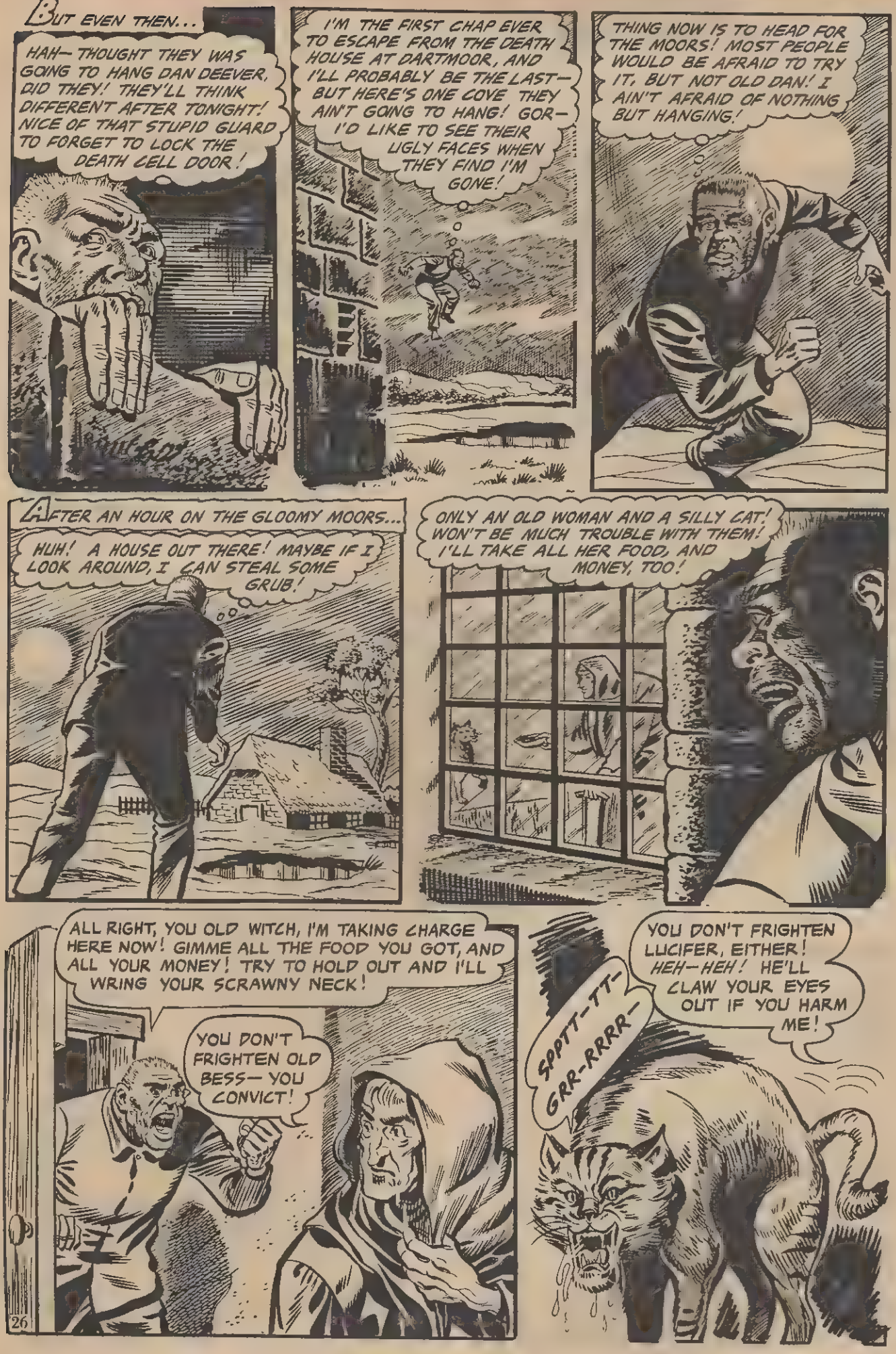
A COFFIN ALIVE--TALKING! YOU SNAPPED YOUR CUE, PAL! BETTER CUT OUT READING SO MANY OF THEM HORROR STORIES!

The End

ON AND ON STAGGERED THE FUGITIVE FROM A NOOSE — ON ACROSS THE BLEAK AND FORBIDDING MOOR WHERE DEATH LURKED IN EVERY STEP, AND TERROR LAY LIKE A DEMON BENEATH THE GREEN SCUM OF THE BOG PITS! FOR A CONVICTED MURDERER, EVEN THE MOOR HELD LESS HORROR THAN THE ROPE HE HAD SO NARROWLY ESCAPED, BUT AN HOUR BEFORE, AND HE MIGHT WELL HAVE ESCAPED HAD IT NOT BEEN FOR A CRAZED OLD WOMAN AND HER STRANGE AND REVOLTING PET, **THE DEVIL CAT...**

MURDER on the MOOR —

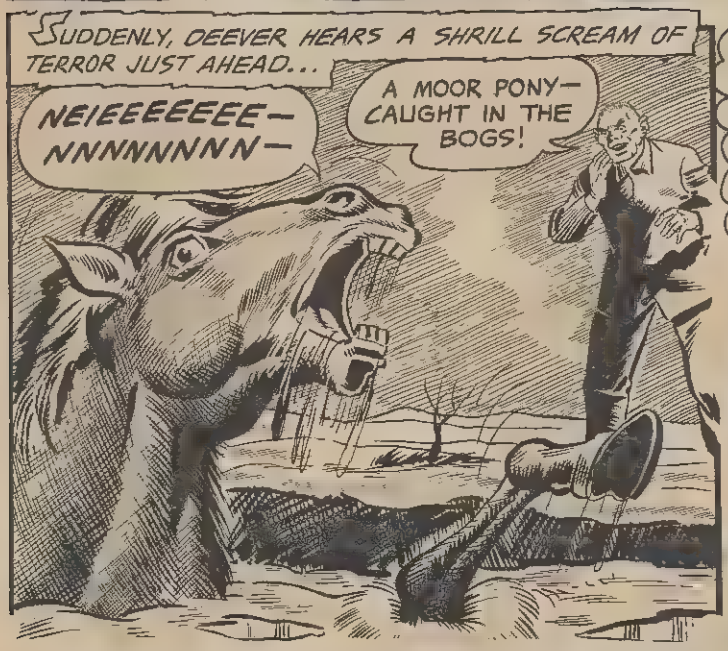


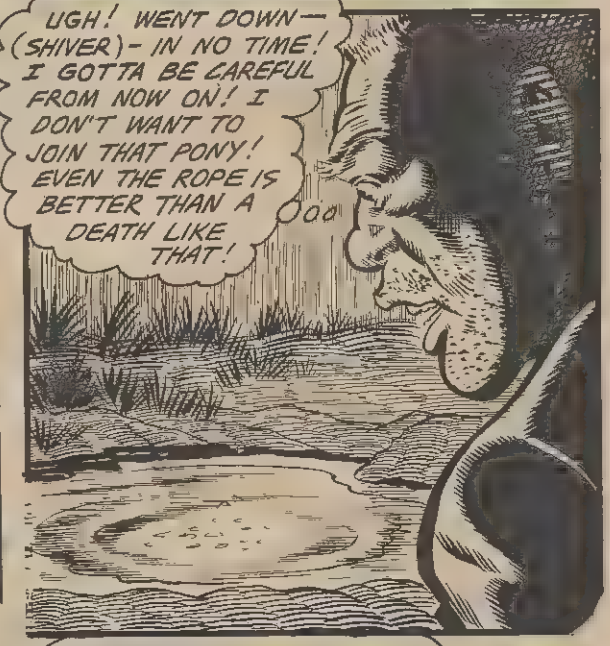

BUT EVEN THEN...
HAH— THOUGHT THEY WAS GOING TO HANG DAN DEEVER, DID THEY! THEY'LL THINK DIFFERENT AFTER TONIGHT! NICE OF THAT STUPID GUARD TO FORGET TO LOCK THE DEATH CELL DOOR!
I'M THE FIRST CHAP EVER TO ESCAPE FROM THE DEATH HOUSE AT DARTMOOR, AND I'LL PROBABLY BE THE LAST— BUT HERE'S ONE COVE THEY AIN'T GOING TO HANG! GOR— I'D LIKE TO SEE THEIR UGLY FACES WHEN THEY FIND I'M GONE!
THING NOW IS TO HEAD FOR THE MOORS! MOST PEOPLE WOULD BE AFRAID TO TRY IT, BUT NOT OLD DAN! I AIN'T AFRAID OF NOTHING BUT HANGING!
AFTER AN HOUR ON THE GLOOMY MOORS...
HUH! A HOUSE OUT THERE! MAYBE IF I LOOK AROUND, I CAN STEAL SOME GRUB!
ONLY AN OLD WOMAN AND A SILLY CAT! WON'T BE MUCH TROUBLE WITH THEM! I'LL TAKE ALL HER FOOD, AND MONEY, TOO!
ALL RIGHT, YOU OLD WITCH, I'M TAKING CHARGE HERE NOW! GIMME ALL THE FOOD YOU GOT, AND ALL YOUR MONEY! TRY TO HOLD OUT AND I'LL WRING YOUR SCRAWNY NECK!
YOU DON'T FRIGHTEN OLD BESS— YOU CONVICT!
SPPTT-TT-GRR-RRRR-
YOU DON'T FRIGHTEN LUCIFER, EITHER! HEH—HEH! HE'LL CLAW YOUR EYES OUT IF YOU HARM ME!

THAT'S RIGHT, LUCIFER! GET HIM! RAKE HIS UGLY FACE TO SHREDS! LOOKS LIKE A GALLOW'S BIRD TO ME!
K-KEEP THAT DEVIL AWAY!
ARGGGGG- HISSSSSS-
YIIIIIIII — MY EYES! MY FACE! THE BEAST HAS CLAWS LIKE STEEL HOOKS! AHHHH — I'LL KILL YOU, YOU MANGY BEAST! OHHHHH!
SPITT— HISSS— RRRR-
IN A FRENZY OF PAIN AND RAGE, THE CONVICT SWINGS THE CAT BY THE TAIL...
CLAW DAN DEEVER, WILL YOU! I'LL BREAK YOUR NECK, CAT! THIS WILL TEACH YOU!
STOP! IF YOU HARM LUCIFER...
ARRRRRRRR-
AS THE CAT DIES, BESS LEAPS FORWARD WITH A SCREAM OF RAGE...
YOU MURDERED HIM — MY ONLY FRIEND IN THE WORLD! I'LL KILL YOU, TOO, YOU FIEND!
STAY AWAY, OLD WOMAN! I'M WARNING YOU!
ALL RIGHT, YOU DIRTY OLD WITCH, I WARNED YOU! NOW I'LL TEACH YOU TO MONKEY WITH DAN DEEVER! MAYBE MY FIST WILL SHOW YOU WHO IS BOSS!
WHOO-OOOO-
WHOOO-OOO-
WHOOO-
SHE'S DEAD! AND WHAT'S THAT — HOUNDS? THEY'RE ON MY TRAIL! I GOT TO GET OUT OF HERE!
B-BLOODHOUNDS! I NEVER THOUGHT OF THAT! I GOT TO GET BACK TO THE MOOR AND SEE IF I CAN LOSE THEM IN THE BOGS!

SOON... THOSE HOUNDS— STILL ON MY TRAIL! BUT I CAN'T GO ANY FASTER BECAUSE OF THE BOGS! ONE WRONG STEP AND I'M A GONER!
WHOOOO— OOOOO—

GUESS I'LL HAVE TO GO DEEPER INTO THE BOGS AFTER ALL! THEM BLOOD-HOUNDS ARE GETTING TOO CLOSE FOR COMFORT!
WHOOOO— OOOOOO—


SUDDENLY, DEEVER HEARS A SHRILL SCREAM OF TERROR JUST AHEAD...
NEIEEEEEEE— NNNNNNNN—
A MOOR PONY— CAUGHT IN THE BOGS!

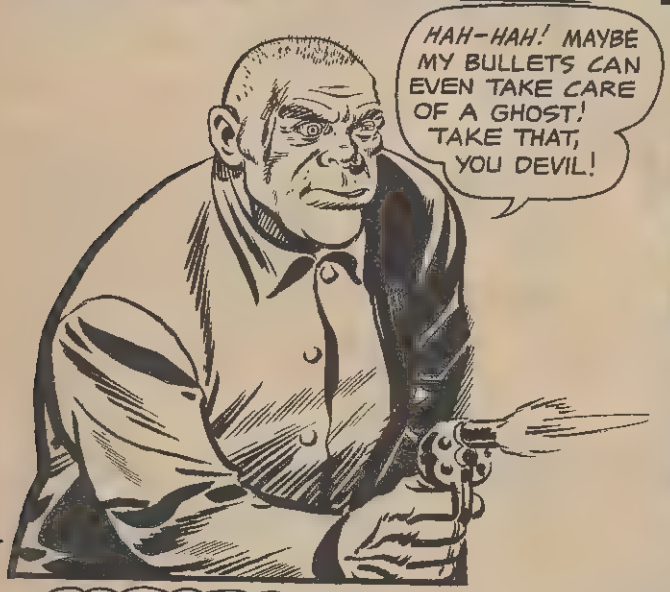

UGH! WENT DOWN— (SHIVER)- IN NO TIME! I GOTTA BE CAREFUL FROM NOW ON! I DON'T WANT TO JOIN THAT PONY! EVEN THE ROPE IS BETTER THAN A DEATH LIKE THAT!

DEEVER HEARS A SOUND BEHIND HIM THAT CHILLS HIS NERVES! AS HE WHIRLS IN PANIC...
HUH! THAT CAT! B-BUT IT CAN'T BE — I KILLED IT BACK AT THE COTTAGE!
GRRRRROUGHH— SPUTTERRR— SPITTT—

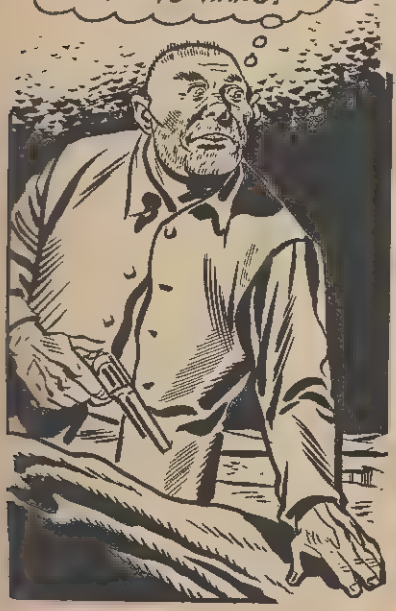
Y—YOU AIN'T REAL! YOU'RE A GHOST CAT!
GRRRRRRRR— RRRRRRRRRR—

MOMENTS LATER...
GUESS I WAS JUST SEEING THINGS AFTER ALL! NO S-SIGN OF THE CAT AROUND NOW! MUST OF BEEN MY NERVES!

BUT...
AAHH— THE GHOST CAT AGAIN! BUT I'LL TAKE CARE OF YOU THIS TIME!
ARRRRRRR-RRRRRRR-


HAH-HAH! MAYBE MY BULLETS CAN EVEN TAKE CARE OF A GHOST! TAKE THAT, YOU DEVIL!

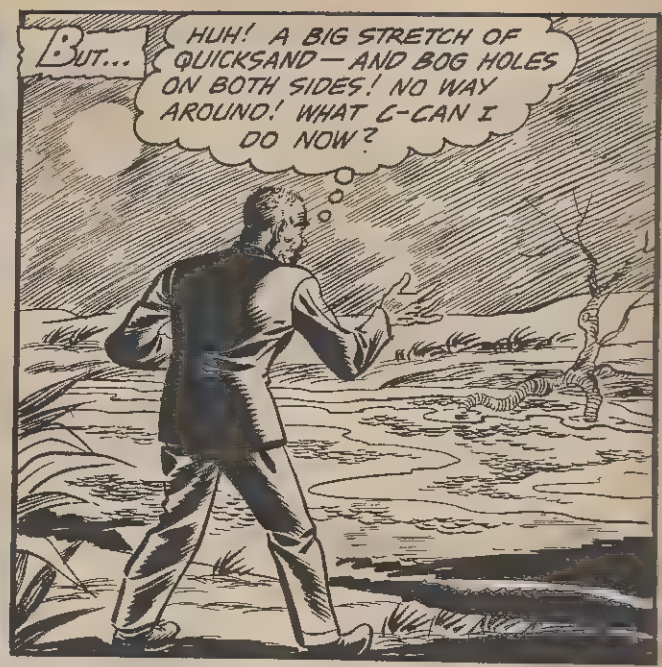
GONE AGAIN! AND THOSE SHOTS WILL TELL THE POLICE WHERE I AM! I REALLY GOT TO RUN FOR IT NOW! NO TIME TO WORRY ABOUT THE BOGS!

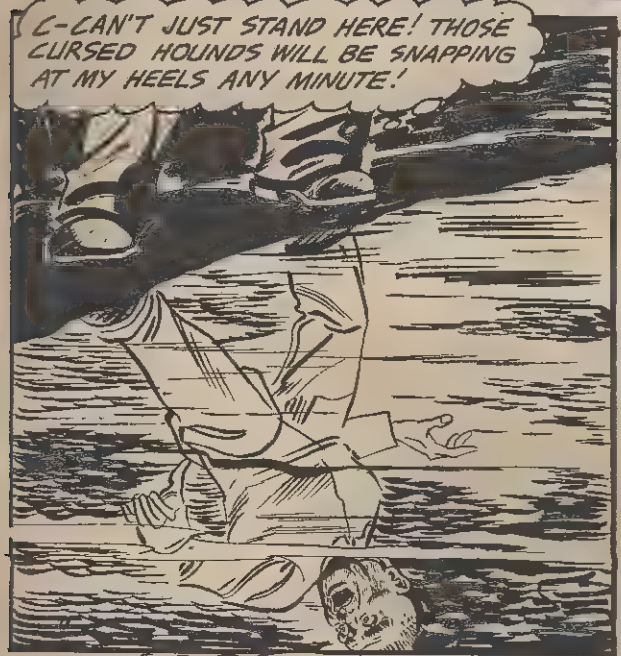

I GOT TO THINK THIS OUT! ALL MY BULLETS GONE, WASTED ON THAT FIENDISH CAT! BUT THERE'S GOT TO BE A WAY OUT— THERE'S JUST GOTTA BE! I DON'T WANT TO HANG!

WHILE NOT FAR BEHIND...
WE'LL HAVE HIM BEFORE LONG NOW! THOSE SHOTS WILL GUIDE US TO HIM!
LOOKS LIKE HE'S HEADING-INTO THE BOGS AFTER ALL!

THOSE BOGS ARE MURDER, TOO! IF DAN AIN'T CAREFUL, MAYBE HE'LL SAVE US THE TROUBLE OF STRETCHING HIS ROTTEN NECK!
HOPE NOT! I WANT TO SEE HIM HANG FOR KILLING OLD BESS! POOR OLD SOUL!

THOSE DOGS ARE GETTING CLOSER ALL THE TIME! FORCING ME FARTHER INTO THE BOGS! BUT THEY WON'T GET ME! OTHER MEN HAVE GONE THROUGH THESE BOGS AND SO CAN I!

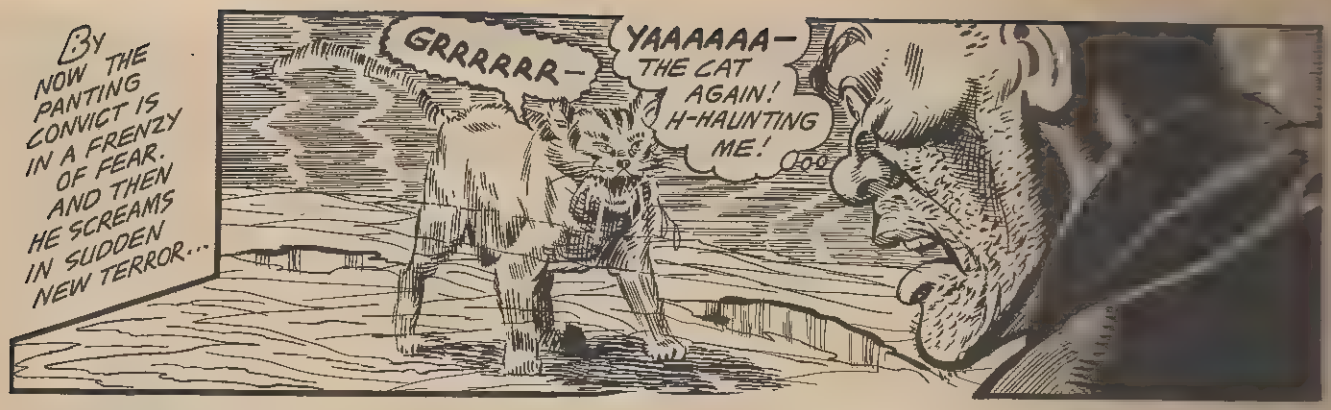

BUT...
HUH! A BIG STRETCH OF QUICKSAND—AND BOG HOLES ON BOTH SIDES! NO WAY AROUND! WHAT C-CAN I DO NOW?


C-CAN'T JUST STAND HERE! THOSE CURSED HOUNDS WILL BE SNAPPING AT MY HEELS ANY MINUTE!

NOTHING TO DO BUT —JUMP!

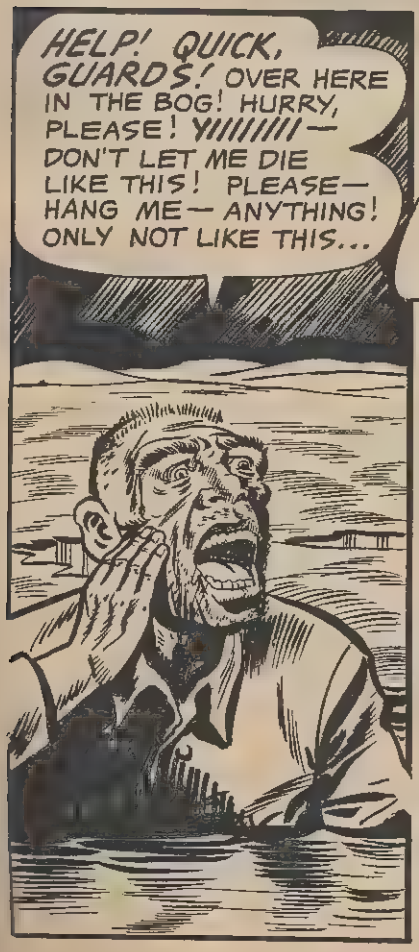
J-JUST MADE IT! I CAN PULL MYSELF OUT OF THE SAND— B-BUT THOSE DOGS NEVER GIVE UP! THEY'RE RIGHT BEHIND ME!

AHWOOOOO-OOOO-
WHOO-OOOO-


By now the panting convict is in a frenzy of fear. And then he screams in sudden new terror...
GRRRRRR—
YAAAAAA— THE CAT AGAIN! H-HAUNTING ME!

I'LL GET YOU THIS TIME, SEE IF I DON'T! I'LL WRING YOUR MANGY NECK TILL THERE AIN'T A GROWL LEFT IN YOU! YOU WON'T EVER BOTHER DAN DEEVER AGAIN!

H-HUH! OH, NO! N-NOT THE BOG! I—I'M STUCK HELP!


HELP! QUICK, GUARDS! OVER HERE IN THE BOG! HURRY, PLEASE! YIIIIIIII— DON'T LET ME DIE LIKE THIS! PLEASE— HANG ME— ANYTHING! ONLY NOT LIKE THIS...

HELP ME!
EEEEEE-
YIIIIIIIII-

IT'S DAN RIGHT ENOUGH! LOOKS LIKE THERE WON'T BE ANY HANGING TONIGHT! UGH— WHAT A DEATH EVEN FOR A MURDERER!
FUNNY, THOUGH— THE PATH IS PLAIN ENOUGH HERE! WONDER HOW HE GOT OFF OF IT?
GLURR-URGG-

Be My GHOST

PULL UP A NICE COMFORTABLE COFFIN AND LISTEN TO THIS LITTLE GEM OF PURE HORROR! THE PLACE IS PARIS--THE SUBJECT IS DEATH--AND THE HORROR, WELL, YOU'LL BE LOOKING BEHIND YOU EVERY MOMENT FROM NOW ON! AND DON'T BLAME US WHEN THE SWEAT POPS OUT COLD ON YOUR BODY, AND YOUR EYES BULGE WITH TERROR! WHEN YOU START SCREAMING FOR HELP DON'T EXPECT IT FROM US, EITHER! WE'RE LOOKING FOR A GOOD SAFE HIDING PLACE OURSELVES! SO YOU'VE BEEN WARNED--NOW GO AHEAD AND READ **THE KNIFE OF CONSCIENCE...**

PIERRE DUVAL AND HIS WIFE, VERY MUCH IN LOVE, HAVE A PROBLEM! ONE DAY IN THEIR SHABBY LITTLE GARRET OVERLOOKING THE CHIMNEY POTS OF PARIS...

GIGI! YOU MEAN IT! WE'RE REALLY GOING TO HAVE A CHILD AT LAST! OF COURSE I'M HAPPY, DARLING, BUT HOW CAN WE AFFORD IT?

I KNEW YOU WOULD SAY THAT, SWEETHEART! BUT YOU MUSTN'T WORRY! I KNOW WE'LL GET BY SOMEHOW!

BUT HOW? TIMES ARE SO BAD! I MAKE SO LITTLE MONEY AND YOU KNOW HOW PRICES ARE! HOW ON EARTH WILL WE EVER MANAGE TO FEED A BABY?

YOU'LL FIND A WAY, PIERRE! FOR YOUR CHILD! I KNOW IT! NOW COME AND HAVE YOUR SUPPER AND TRY TO LOOK A LITTLE HAPPIER!

BUT PIERRE DOES WORRY! HE KNOWS MORE OF THE WORLD THAN DOES GIGI, AND HE KNOWS THAT BABIES ARE VERY EXPENSIVE! SO ONE DAY HE HEARS OF A CERTAIN JOB AND GOES TO SEE AN IMPORTANT OFFICIAL...
HMM--I SEE! NO EXPERIENCE, BUT THAT DOESN'T MATTER! THE THING IS--ARE YOU ABSOLUTELY CERTAIN THAT YOU WANT THIS JOB?
YES, YOUR HONOR! THAT IS--NO! WHAT I MEAN IS THAT I DON'T REALLY WANT IT, BUT I MUST TAKE IT! I NEED THE MONEY DESPERATELY! I'M GOING TO BE A FATHER!
LATER...
YES, GIGI, I GOT THE JOB! IT WILL, ER, MEAN A LOT OF TRAVELING! I'LL BE AWAY FROM HOME A LOT OF THE TIME! BUT THE PAY IS GOOD!
BUT JUST WHAT KIND OF A JOB IS IT, PIERRE? YOU SOUND SO UNHAPPY ABOUT IT! WHAT ARE YOU SELLING?
PIERRE LIES ABOUT THE JOB AND WHEN HE IS ALONE HIS THOUGHTS ARE NOT PLEASANT...
I DREAD DOING WHAT I HAVE TO DO! I'M GOING TO HATE EVERY MOMENT OF IT! BUT I MUST! I MUST HAVE THAT EXTRA MONEY FOR THE BABY!
ONE BLEAK MORNING, IN THE NORTH OF FRANCE, PIERRE APPROACHES HIS PLACE OF WORK FOR THE FIRST TIME! THE EARLY MORNING FOG IS DANK AND GRAY AND HANGS LIKE A SHROUD OVER THE GREAT STONE PRISON...
WELL, HERE I GO! I'VE GOT TO GO THROUGH WITH IT NOW! I CAN'T TURN BACK! I ONLY HOPE THAT MY DEAR WIFE NEVER FINDS OUT ABOUT THIS!
AND PIERRE DUVAL PUTS ON THE BLACK MASK OF THE STATE EXECUTIONER AND LEADS A DOOMED MAN UP THE STEPS TO THE WAITING, THIRSTY GUILLOTINE...
POOR DEVIL! I HAVEN'T THE NERVE TO LOOK INTO HIS EYES! AND I'M THE ONE THAT'S GOING TO KILL HIM! BUT I MUST--I MUST!
B-BUT I'M NOT REALLY DOING IT AT ALL! I'M ONLY THE INSTRUMENT OF THE STATE, OF JUSTICE! SOMEONE MUST DO THE ACTUAL WORK! AND HE'S A MURDERER--HE DESERVES TO DIE!

SO THE MONTHS PASS AND THE BABY COMES! AND PIERRE, THOUGH STILL HATING HIS JOB, COMES TO REGARD IT AS PERMANENT! HE NEEDS MONEY NOW MORE THAN EVER...

LOOK AT HIM, GIGI! SEE HOW SWEETLY HE SLEEPS!

IT'S ABOUT TIME YOU PAID SOME ATTENTION TO HIM-- AND TO ME! WE NEVER SEE YOU ANYMORE!

YOU PROMISED ME YOU'D GIVE UP THAT MYSTERIOUS JOB OF YOURS! WHATEVER IT IS, I DON'T LIKE IT! QUIT IT AND GET A JOB NEAR HOME!

YOU KNOW I CAN'T DO THAT! IT PAYS VERY WELL, AND WE NEED THE MONEY! BUT I PROMISE I'LL QUIT AS SOON AS I CAN!

SO MORE MONTHS PASS AND MORE HEADS FALL AS PIERRE WORKS AT HIS JOB! IT IS EASIER NOW AND HE HAS BEEN GIVEN A RAISE...

WONDER WHO THIS ONE IS? THE OFFICIALS WERE VERY SECRETIVE FOR SOME REASON-- SEEMED TO THINK I MIGHT NOT WANT THE JOB!

WHAT'S ALL THE MYSTERY ABOUT, SIR? WHY WASN'T I TOLD THE NAME OF THE PRISONER I'M TO EXECUTE?

YOU'LL SEE! THIS WILL BE YOUR (COUGH) FIRST TIME FOR ***THIS*** SORT OF EXECUTION! SOME OF THE OTHERS HAVE REFUSED TO EXECUTE A ***WOMAN!***

AND PIERRE IS FILLED WITH A SENSE OF HORROR AS HE SEES THE PRISONER...

NO! I C-CAN'T GO THROUGH WITH IT! I WAS GETTING SO I DIDN'T MIND THE MEN SO MUCH, B-BUT A WOMAN!

LET'S GET ON WITH IT, SHALL WE! NONE OF US LIKE THIS DAY'S WORK!

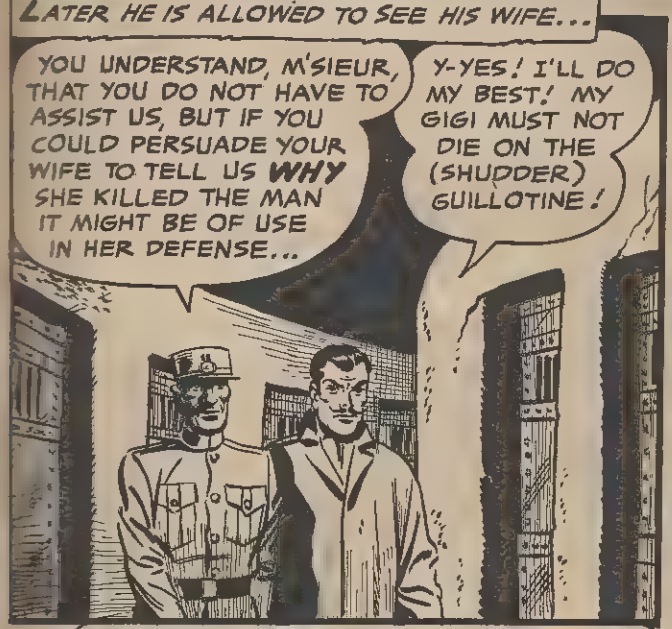
SO HE GOES THROUGH WITH THE GRISLY EXECUTION.... BUT AS THE KNIFE SWOOPS DOWN, PIERRE MAKES A RESOLUTION, A PROMISE TO HIMSELF...

THIS IS THE LAST ONE! ABSOLUTELY! I'M FINISHED! NOT FOR ALL THE MONEY IN FRANCE WOULD I GO THROUGH THAT AGAIN! I'LL BE SEEING THAT POOR WOMAN'S FACE IN MY DREAMS FOR YEARS!

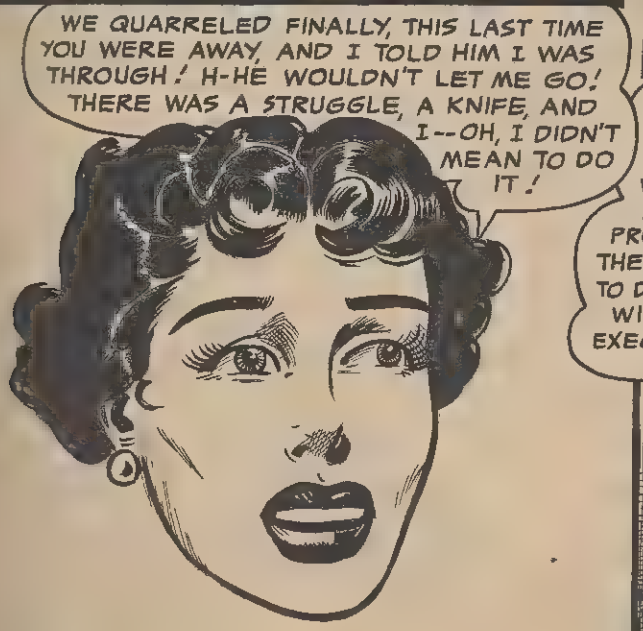
I'LL GET A JOB IN PARIS SO I CAN ALWAYS BE WITH GIGI AND THE BABY! I'LL TELL GIGI I WAS FIRED! SHE WON'T MIND THAT, BECAUSE SHE'S BEEN WANTING ME TO QUIT FOR MONTHS! THANK GOODNESS IT'S ALL OVER AT LAST--AND GIGI NEVER FOUND OUT!

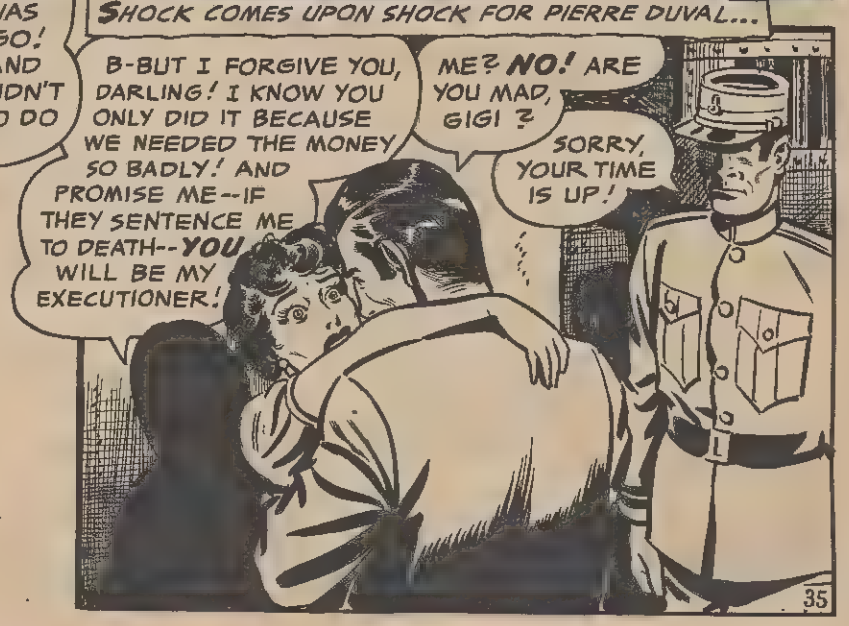
BUT WHEN HE REACHES HIS HOME...
H-HUH! THE POLICE! WHAT DO YOU WANT HERE ?
YOU'RE PIERRE DUVAL? WE'VE GOT BAD NEWS FOR YOU, I'M AFRAID! YOUR WIFE IS IN TROUBLE! VERY BAD TROUBLE!
SHE KILLED A MAN! HER LOVER!

YOU DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT THE LOVER, I SUPPOSE! HUSBANDS NEVER DO! ANYWAY SHE KILLED HIM, AND SHE WON'T TELL US WHY! YOUR CHILD IS IN THE CARE OF FRIENDS!
GIGI! A LOVER! A MURDERESS! I-- I CAN'T BELIEVE IT!


LATER HE IS ALLOWED TO SEE HIS WIFE...
YOU UNDERSTAND, M'SIEUR, THAT YOU DO NOT HAVE TO ASSIST US, BUT IF YOU COULD PERSUADE YOUR WIFE TO TELL US WHY SHE KILLED THE MAN IT MIGHT BE OF USE IN HER DEFENSE...
Y-YES! I'LL DO MY BEST! MY GIGI MUST NOT DIE ON THE (SHUDDER) GUILLOTINE!

AND...
TELL ME, GIGI, TELL ME! WHY DID YOU DO IT? I MUST KNOW IF I'M TO HELP YOU!
I--I FOUND OUT ABOUT YOU! THAT YOU WERE THE STATE EXECUTIONER! I WAS SICK WITH DISGUST SO I-- I BEGAN TO SEE THIS OTHER MAN...


WE QUARRELED FINALLY, THIS LAST TIME YOU WERE AWAY, AND I TOLD HIM I WAS THROUGH! H-HE WOULDN'T LET ME GO! THERE WAS A STRUGGLE, A KNIFE, AND I--OH, I DIDN'T MEAN TO DO IT!


SHOCK COMES UPON SHOCK FOR PIERRE DUVAL...
B-BUT I FORGIVE YOU, DARLING! I KNOW YOU ONLY DID IT BECAUSE WE NEEDED THE MONEY SO BADLY! AND PROMISE ME--IF THEY SENTENCE ME TO DEATH--YOU WILL BE MY EXECUTIONER!
ME? NO! ARE YOU MAD, GIGI ?
SORRY, YOUR TIME IS UP!

BUT FRENCH LAW IS INEXORABLE! GIGI IS TRIED AND CONVICTED OF MURDER AND SENTENCED TO DIE ON THE GUILLOTINE...
TIME TO GO NOW, MADAME DUVAL! YOUR--ER--HUSBAND IS WAITING TO SEE YOU IN THE OFFICE OF THE WARDEN!
THANK YOU! I AM READY TO DIE! I HAVE MADE MY PEACE WITH THIS WORLD AND AM READY FOR THE NEXT! AND I KNOW MY HUSBAND WILL NOT FAIL ME!
BUT PIERRE, RAVAGED BY TORMENT, BEGS HER NOT TO MAKE HIM BE HER EXECUTIONER...
PLEASE, MY DARLING! D-DON'T HOLD ME TO MY PROMISE! I CAN'T DO IT--I CAN'T!
NO! YOU MUST KEEP YOUR PROMISE! REMEMBER, IT IS THE LAST YOU CAN EVER DO FOR ME ON THIS EARTH! IF YOU DO IT I--I CAN BE BRAVE!
STRANGE, THIS! A WIFE BEGGING HER HUSBAND TO BE HER EXECUTIONER!
SO...
VERY WELL, GIGI! I PROMISE! I WILL DO IT! AS A LAST ACT OF LOVE I WILL--DROP THE KNIFE!
I KNEW YOU WOULD, SWEET! IT WILL BE EASIER FOR ME THAT WAY! NOW ONE MORE PROMISE!
COME! WE MUST GO NOW!
HER LAST REQUEST...
I WILL SEE TO IT! THE BOY WILL NEVER KNOW! I'LL LEAVE THE COUNTRY IMMEDIATELY! TAKE HIM TO AMERICA! HE WILL NEVER KNOW WHAT A GUILLOTINE IS! I SWEAR IT!
YES! DO THAT FOR ME AND I WILL REST PEACEFULLY! HE WILL NEVER EVEN KNOW THE WORD GUILLOTINE OR WHAT IT MEANS! THEY DO NOT HAVE SUCH THINGS IN AMERICA!
SO, AS A LAST ACT OF LOVE, PIERRE DUVAL PULLS THE RELEASE THAT SEVERS HIS WIFE'S HEAD...
AHHH--IT--IT'S OVER! AND SHE DIDN'T SUFFER! SHE WAS B-BRAVE TO THE VERY LAST! AND NOW I MUST KEEP MY PROMISE TO HER!
IMMEDIATELY HE GOES TO THE HOME OF FRIENDS, WHERE THE LITTLE BOY IS STAYING...
H-HOW IS HE, JULES? HE DOESN'T --KNOW ANYTHING? ABOUT WHAT HAS HAPPENED?
OF COURSE NOT! HE'S PLAYING AS HAPPILY AS A PUPPY! I BOUGHT HIM ONE OF THOSE MECHANICAL SETS! GO AND SEE!
AND PIERRE DUVAL OPENS THE DOOR AND SEES HIS SON...
PAPA! COME AND SEE! I MADE A PLAY TOY ALL BY MYSELF...
OH--GAAAA AAAAAAA!
The End

MONSTER in the MIST

IN THE DARK OF NIGHT, WHEN THE MOON LAY PALE AND SICKLY IN THE SKY, THE **THING** CAME! PROWLING THROUGH THE MIST WITH SLAVERING FANGS, LUSTING FOR ITS PREY! ALL THE ENGLISH COUNTRYSIDE NEAR THE ANCIENT ROMAN CAMP LAY IN THE GRIP OF HORROR! WHAT WAS THIS DEMON, THIS FIENDISH THING THAT LIVED ON THE BLOOD AND BONES OF HUMAN BEINGS? NO ONE KNEW! THEY KNEW ONLY THE TERROR INSPIRED BY **THE BEAST FROM THE PAST...**

IN LONDON THE DREADFUL NEWS IS CRIED AGAIN...

EXTRA! THE DORSET MONSTER KILLS AGAIN! HORRIBLE MURDER IN SOUTH ENGLAND! POLICE ARE BAFFLED! EXTRA! READ IT!

UGH! WHY ARE THE POLICE SO HELPLESS?

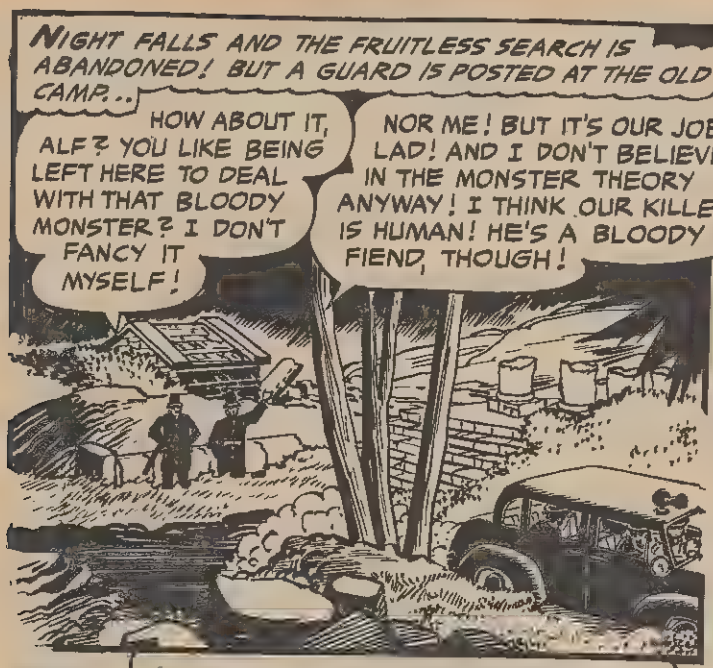
NEWS

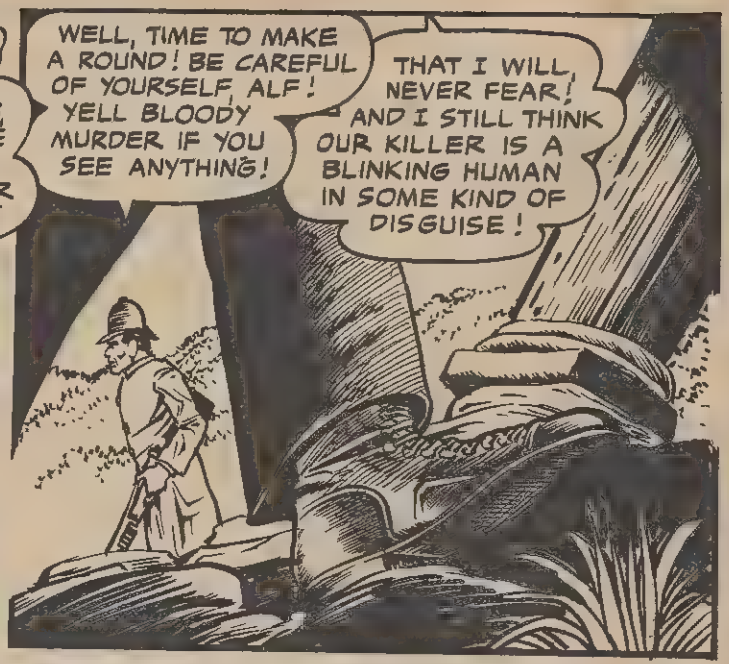
DORST MONSTER KILLS

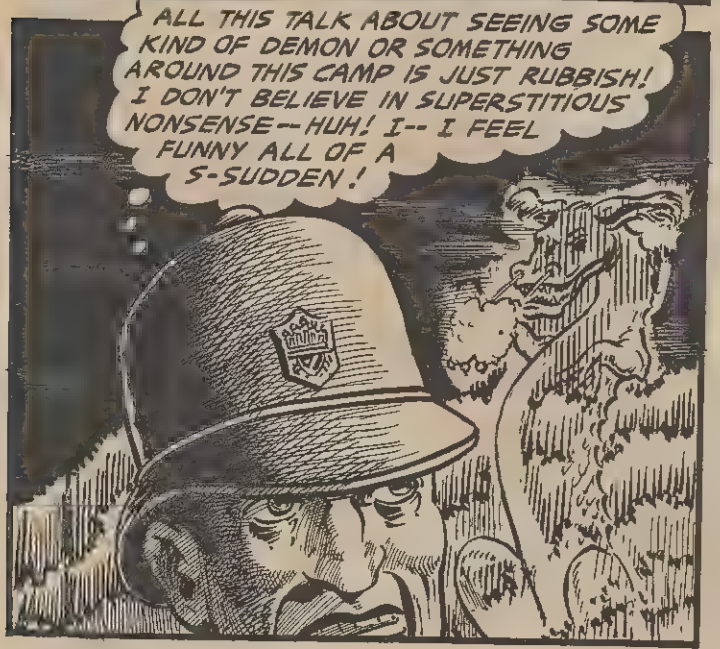
WHILE IN DORSET NEAR AN OLD ROMAN CAMP...

NOTHING TO BE SEEN AROUND HERE NOW, SIR!

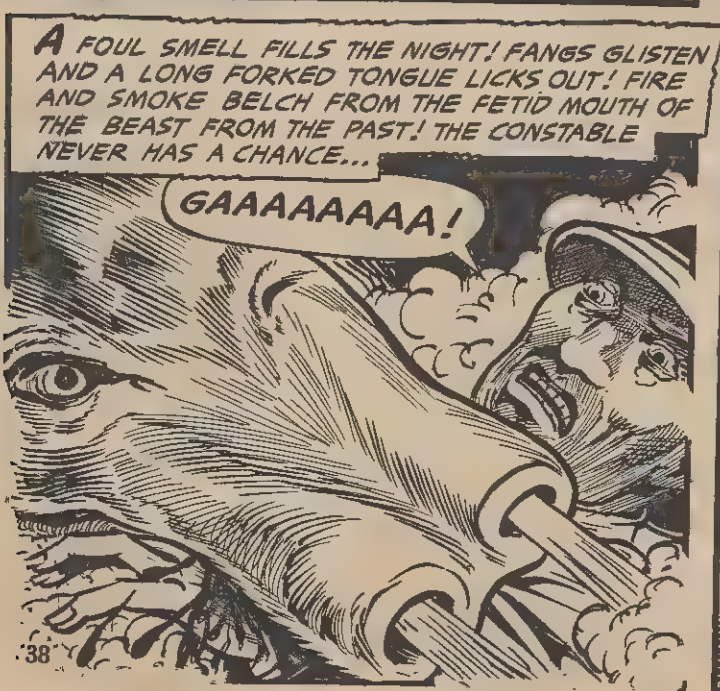
NATURALLY! THE MONSTER ALWAYS DISAPPEARS JUST AFTER A KILLING! IT'S HAD ITS FILL FOR NOW, BUT IT WILL COME BACK! WE MUST BE READY!


NIGHT FALLS AND THE FRUITLESS SEARCH IS ABANDONED! BUT A GUARD IS POSTED AT THE OLD CAMP...
HOW ABOUT IT, ALF? YOU LIKE BEING LEFT HERE TO DEAL WITH THAT BLOODY MONSTER? I DON'T FANCY IT MYSELF!
NOR ME! BUT IT'S OUR JOB, LAD! AND I DON'T BELIEVE IN THE MONSTER THEORY ANYWAY! I THINK OUR KILLER IS HUMAN! HE'S A BLOODY FIEND, THOUGH!


WELL, TIME TO MAKE A ROUND! BE CAREFUL OF YOURSELF, ALF! YELL BLOODY MURDER IF YOU SEE ANYTHING!
THAT I WILL, NEVER FEAR! AND I STILL THINK OUR KILLER IS A BLINKING HUMAN IN SOME KIND OF DISGUISE!


ALL THIS TALK ABOUT SEEING SOME KIND OF DEMON OR SOMETHING AROUND THIS CAMP IS JUST RUBBISH! I DON'T BELIEVE IN SUPERSTITIOUS NONSENSE--HUH! I-- I FEEL FUNNY ALL OF A S-SUDDEN!

TURN AROUND, MAN! TURN AROUND! SHOOT--SHOOT...
AAARRRRR!
GREAT SCOTT! IT--IT'S AFTER ME! HELP-- HELP!


A FOUL SMELL FILLS THE NIGHT! FANGS GLISTEN AND A LONG FORKED TONGUE LICKS OUT! FIRE AND SMOKE BELCH FROM THE FETID MOUTH OF THE BEAST FROM THE PAST! THE CONSTABLE NEVER HAS A CHANCE...
GAAAAAAAA!

HIS COMPANION, SUMMONED BY THE FRENZIED SCREAMS, ARRIVES TOO LATE! HE SEES SOMETHING HIDEOUS JUST VANISHING INTO THE MIST...
THAT DEVIL--WHATEVER IT IS! LOOKS LIKE ITS DONE FOR POOR OLD ALF! AND I CAN'T HURT IT WITH BULLETS! THEY GO RIGHT THROUGH IT!

LATER BACK IN LONDON A TOP LEVEL CONFERENCE IS HELD AT SCOTLAND YARD...

SORRY TO CALL YOU ON SUCH SHORT NOTICE, DR. FENN, BUT IT'S THE DORSET MONSTER AGAIN, OF COURSE, AND WE NEED YOUR HELP!

GLAD TO DO ANYTHING I CAN, COMMISSIONER! I'VE BEEN FOLLOWING THE CASE WITH INTEREST!

YOU'RE DEALING WITH A PSYCHIC MANIFESTATION OF EVIL, I BELIEVE! I'VE STUDIED THE HISTORY OF THIS PARTICULAR DEMON! IT WAS INVOKED CENTURIES AGO BY THE OLD DRUIDS!

LATER...

HOW ARE YOU GOING TO DESTROY THE THING, CHRISTOPHER?

I'VE GOT A PLAN, WENDY, BUT I DON'T KNOW IF IT WILL WORK! WE'LL JUST HAVE TO WAIT AND SEE-- AND IT WILL BE DANGEROUS!

THEY REACH THE SITE OF THE OLD CAMP...

OH, IT'S SO CREEPY! C-COULDN'T WE DO THIS IN THE DAY TIME?

NIGHT IS BETTER! NOW IF MY THEORY IS RIGHT THE DRUIDS ORIGINALLY CREATED THE MONSTER AS A CURSE ON THE ROMANS, WHO THEY HATED! IT WAS SUPPOSED TO DEVOUR ROMANS

THAT BOOK! AND WHY ARE YOU CHANTING LIKE THAT?

THIS IS AN OLD BOOK KNOWN AS THE DEVIL'S CATALOG! THIS SPELL IS SUPPOSED TO RAISE ANY SPIRITS WHICH HAUNT A CERTAIN PLACE! LISTEN--NOSTI DOMINUS TERAT QUANDUM EST...

SUDDENLY FIGURES BEGIN TO MATERIALIZE OUT OF THE DANK MIST...

WHO SEEKS US?

WHO CALLS?

EEEEEEE! THE GHOSTS OF R-ROMAN SOLDIERS!

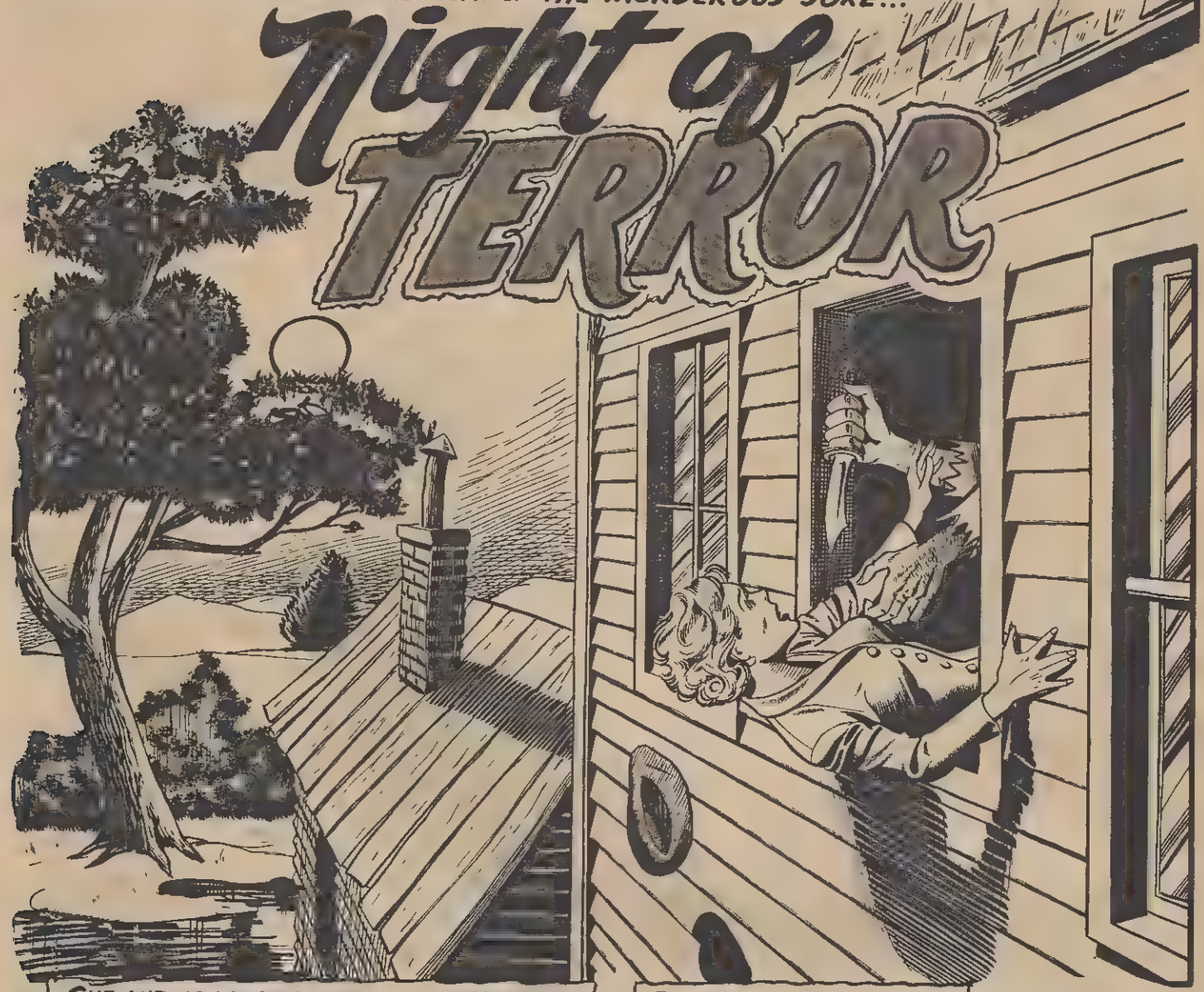
WE ARE AT YOUR SERVICE, MORTAL! BUT LET YOUR BIDDING BE IN HASTE, FOR WE CANNOT STAY LONG! WHY HAVE YOU SUMMONED US FROM OUR GRAVES?

CHRISTOPHER FENN EXPLAINS HIS PLAN TO THE GHOSTLY FIGURES...
LONG AGO THE DRUIDS CURSED YOU AND CREATED A MONSTER TO PREY ON YOU! YOU DIED BUT THE MONSTER LIVES ON AND STILL RETURNS! KILL IT AND GO BACK TO YOUR GRAVES IN PEACE! NO MORTAL CAN SLAY THIS CREATURE, BUT YOU CAN!
AYE--WE REMEMBER! I MYSELF ONCE SAW THIS MONSTER LONG AGO!
WE WILL DO AS YOU WISH! WE WILL HUNT OUT THIS FIEND AND SLAY IT!
HURRY, THEN! IT HAS THE CUNNING OF A FOX AND WILL SMELL DANGER! YOU--LOOK! OVER THERE IN THE MIST!
OHHH--THE M-MONSTER!
BEFORE HE CAN DEFEND HIMSELF ONE OF THE GHOSTLY ROMANS IS SEIZED BY THE FIENDISH APPARITION...
IT HAS TAKEN CLAUDIUS! QUICK, WE MUST HELP HIM!
HAVE NO FEAR! I, ANTONIUS, WILL END THAT EVIL CREATURE'S LIFE WITH MY LANCE!
BUT NOW THE ROMANS HAVE THE MONSTER AT BAY AND BEGIN TO CLOSE IN FOR THE KILL...
LOOK, CHRISTOPHER! THE MONSTER CAN'T HURT THEM! THEY'RE KILLING IT!
YES! THAT'S WHAT I HAD HOPED FOR! THEY ARE SUPERNATURAL FIGURES THEMSELVES AND SO THEY CAN SUCCEED WHERE A MORTAL WOULD FAIL!
THE MONSTER DIES WITH A GHASTLY SHRIEK...
ERRYOWWW!
DIE--VILE BEAST! AND TAKE YOUR CURSE WITH YOU TO THE DEPTHS OF HADES FROM WHICH YOU CAME!
SUDDENLY, WITH THE MONSTER DEAD, THINGS TAKE A NASTY TURN! THE ROMANS, THEIR SWORDS DRIPPING WITH BLOOD, TURN ON THE COUPLE...
AND NOW FOR YOU, MY FRIENDS! WHY SHOULD WE LET YOU LIVE?
SLAY THEM AT ONCE!
WE'RE IN TROUBLE, WENDY! GET READY TO RUN AS FAST AS YOU CAN!
OHHH!

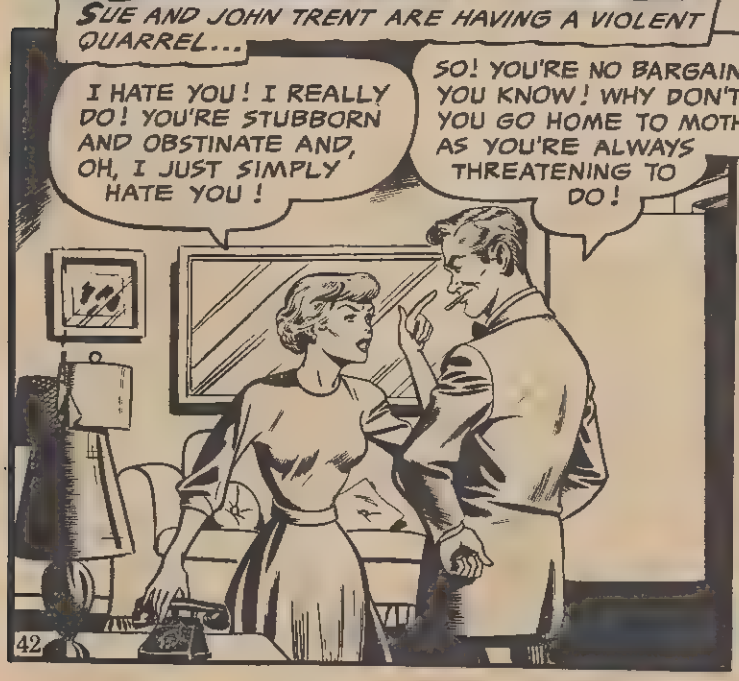
AS THE GHOSTS OF THE ROMAN SOLDIERS PURSUE THE COUPLE...
KILL THEM!
SLIT THEIR THROATS!
CHRISTOPHER! THINK OF SOMETHING FAST!
I AM! RUN! HEAD FOR THE INSIDE OF THE CAMP RAMPARTS!
HALT! BY YOUR OWN ANCIENT RULES ANYONE WHO SEEKS SANCTUARY IN A ROMAN CAMP MUST BE SPARED UNTIL THEY HAVE A FAIR TRIAL! THIS WAS THE ROMAN LAW!
HE IS RIGHT, CURSE HIM!
THEY'RE UP TO SOMETHING! OVER THERE WHISPERING AMONG THEMSELVES! NOW I'VE GOT TO FIND A SPELL TO DEMATERIALIZE THEM--IN A HURRY!
OH, LOOK! THEY'RE COMING BACK AGAIN!
THE GHOSTS COME RUSHING BACK FOR THE KILL, SCREAMING IN TRIUMPH...
SANCTUARY! REMEMBER WE CLAIM SANCTUARY!
HAH! FOOL! WE HAVE HELD YOUR TRIAL!
AND FOUND YOU GUILTY!
YOU DIE!
THEN, IN THE NICK OF TIME, CHRISTOPHER FENN FINDS THE INCANTATION HE HAS BEEN SEARCHING FOR! AS HE UTTERS THE WORDS THE FIGURES OF THE GHOSTS DIM AND BEGIN TO VANISH INTO THE MIST...
OH, CHRISTOPHER, THAT WAS CLOSE! TOO CLOSE! ANOTHER SECOND AND WE WOULD HAVE BEEN AS DEAD AS THEY ARE!
RIGHT! WHEW! BUT WHEN YOU MONKEY AROUND WITH PSYCHIC PHENOMENA, WENDY, YOU'VE GOT TO BE READY FOR ANYTHING! JUST THE SAME, I THINK WE'LL TAKE A LONG VACATION!
SO THE ANCIENT ROMAN CAMP ONCE MORE SLEEPS BENEATH THE BLOOD RED MOON! THE DANK NIGHT MIST RISES AND CURLS OVER THE RUINS LIKE AN EVER CHANGING SHROWD! AND THE MONSTER PROWLS NO MORE...
The End

IT STARTED WITH A SIMPLE LITTLE QUARREL AND ENDED IN FEAR AND HORROR! THE OLD HOUSE MIGHT HAVE BEEN WAITING TO POUNCE, LIKE SOME PREHISTORIC MONSTER, ON THE ILL-FATED COUPLE! SO IF IT'S THRILLS AND CHILLS YOU WANT, IF YOUR BLOOD NEEDS CURDLING, READ ON! IF YOU DARE! FOR THIS IS THE STORY OF **THE MURDEROUS JOKE...**

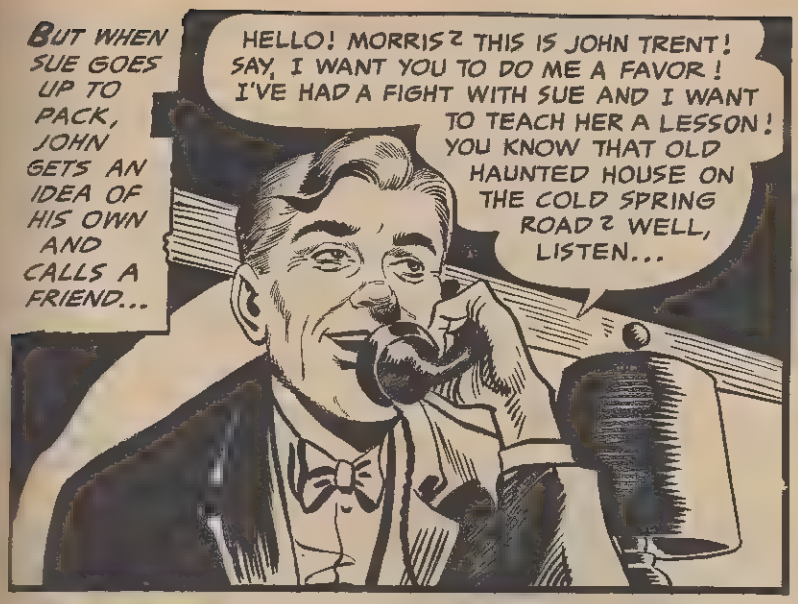
Night of TERROR



SUE AND JOHN TRENT ARE HAVING A VIOLENT QUARREL...

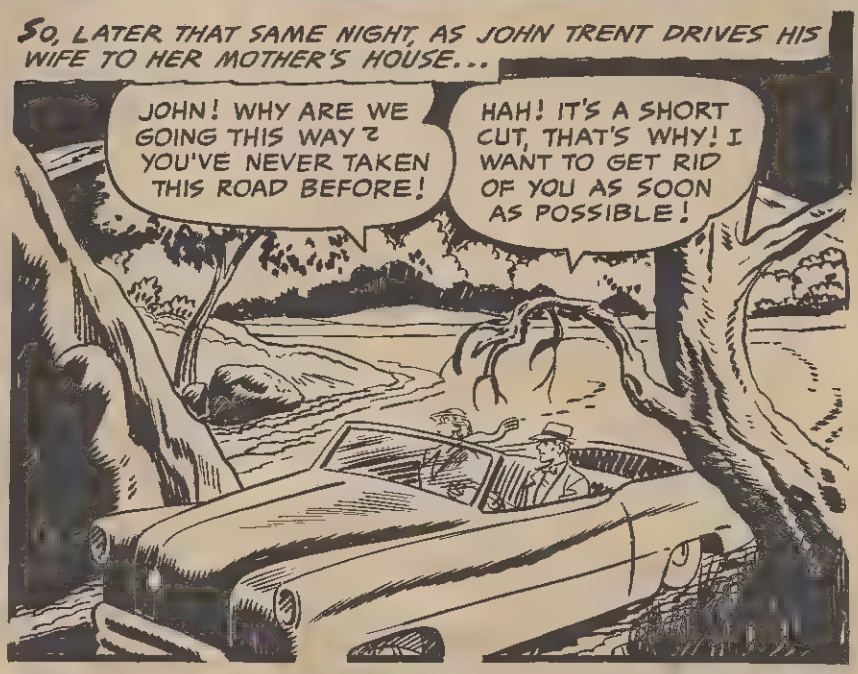


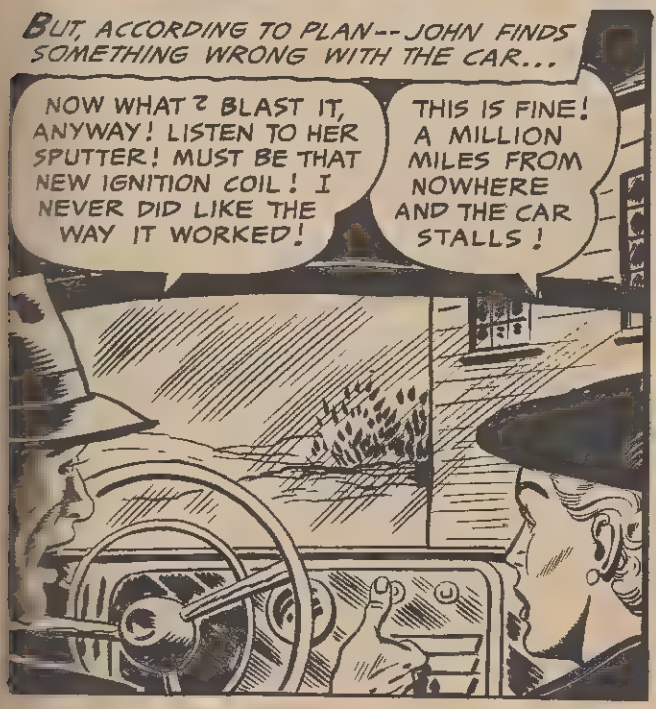
SO A FEW MINUTES LATER...

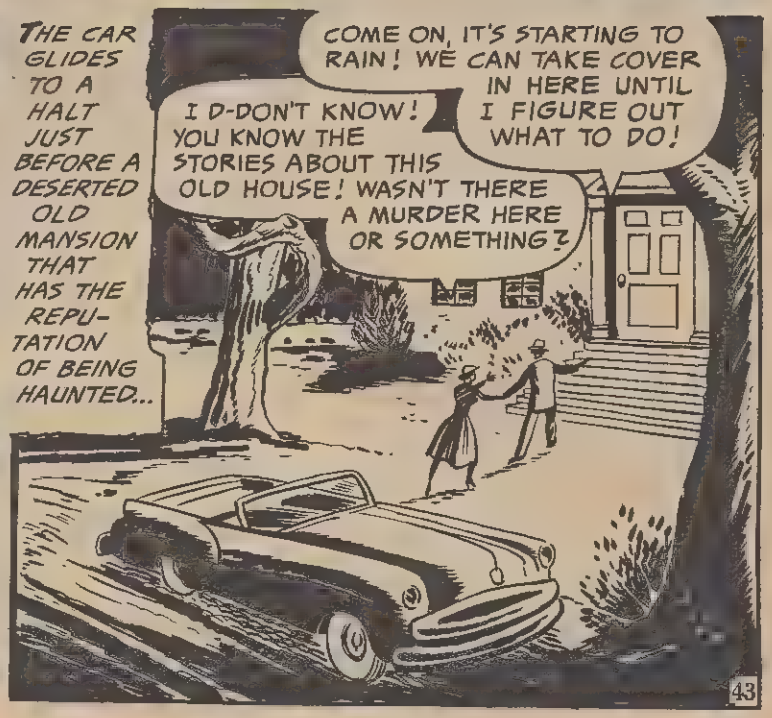

BUT WHEN SUE GOES UP TO PACK, JOHN GETS AN IDEA OF HIS OWN AND CALLS A FRIEND...
HELLO! MORRIS? THIS IS JOHN TRENT! SAY, I WANT YOU TO DO ME A FAVOR! I'VE HAD A FIGHT WITH SUE AND I WANT TO TEACH HER A LESSON! YOU KNOW THAT OLD HAUNTED HOUSE ON THE COLD SPRING ROAD? WELL, LISTEN...

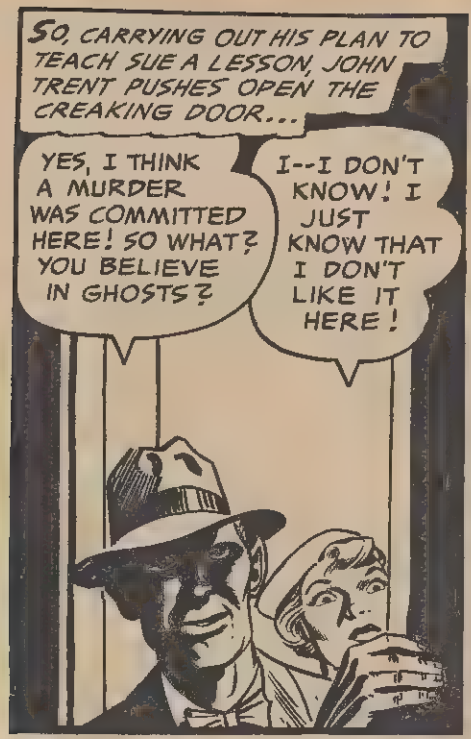
HAH-HAH! SOUNDS LIKE A GOOD IDEA, JOHN! YES, I'LL DO IT, GLAD TO! HAH-HAH! WE'LL REALLY GIVE HER A GOOD SCARE! OKAY, THEN! I'LL SEE YOU THERE!

HAH-HAH! JOHN SURE HAS GOT A SENSE OF HUMOR! AND THIS WILL MAKE HIM LOOK LIKE A HERO IN SUE'S EYES, KEEP HER FROM LOSING HIM! NOW IF I CAN JUST BE A CONVINCING GHOST!

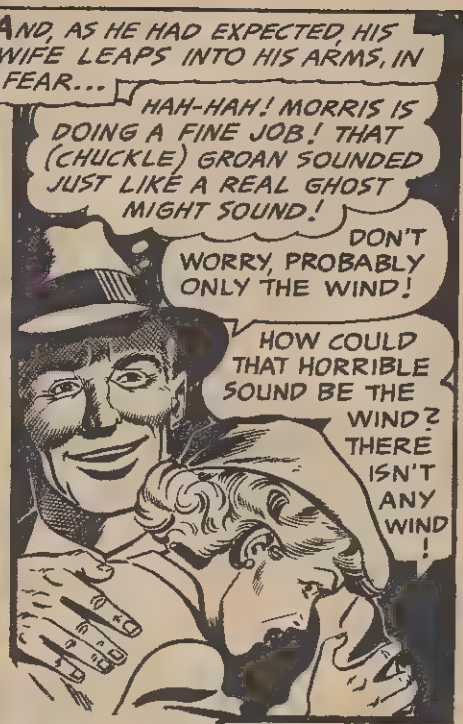

SO, LATER THAT SAME NIGHT, AS JOHN TRENT DRIVES HIS WIFE TO HER MOTHER'S HOUSE...
JOHN! WHY ARE WE GOING THIS WAY? YOU'VE NEVER TAKEN THIS ROAD BEFORE!
HAH! IT'S A SHORT CUT, THAT'S WHY! I WANT TO GET RID OF YOU AS SOON AS POSSIBLE!

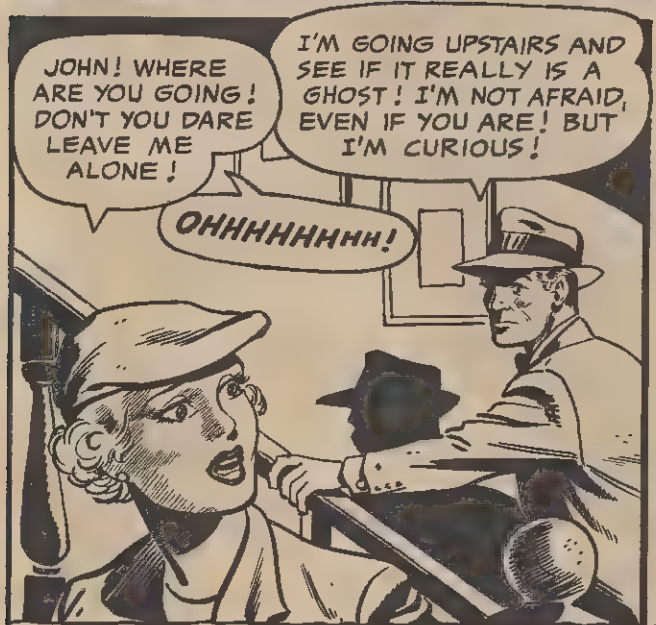

BUT, ACCORDING TO PLAN--JOHN FINDS SOMETHING WRONG WITH THE CAR...
NOW WHAT? BLAST IT, ANYWAY! LISTEN TO HER SPUTTER! MUST BE THAT NEW IGNITION COIL! I NEVER DID LIKE THE WAY IT WORKED!
THIS IS FINE! A MILLION MILES FROM NOWHERE AND THE CAR STALLS!

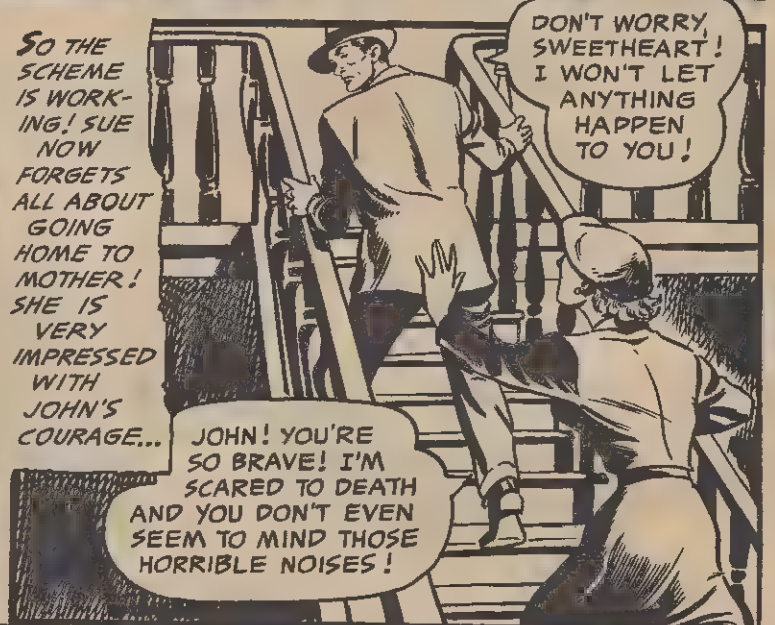

THE CAR GLIDES TO A HALT JUST BEFORE A DESERTED OLD MANSION THAT HAS THE REPUTATION OF BEING HAUNTED...
COME ON, IT'S STARTING TO RAIN! WE CAN TAKE COVER IN HERE UNTIL I FIGURE OUT WHAT TO DO!
I D-DON'T KNOW! YOU KNOW THE STORIES ABOUT THIS OLD HOUSE! WASN'T THERE A MURDER HERE OR SOMETHING?

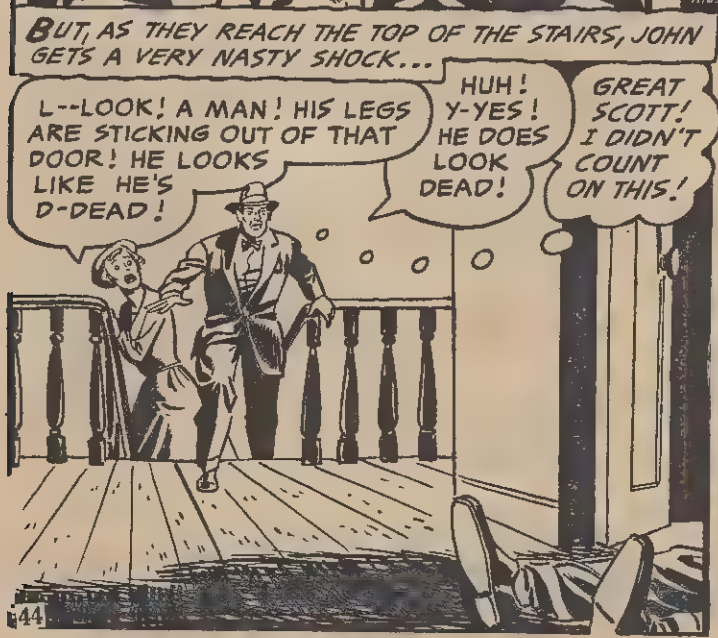

SO, CARRYING OUT HIS PLAN TO TEACH SUE A LESSON, JOHN TRENT PUSHES OPEN THE CREAKING DOOR...
YES, I THINK A MURDER WAS COMMITTED HERE! SO WHAT? YOU BELIEVE IN GHOSTS?
I--I DON'T KNOW! I JUST KNOW THAT I DON'T LIKE IT HERE!

SUDDENLY...
WHOOOOEEEEE!
JOHN! LISTEN! W-WHAT WAS THAT?
HUH! I DON'T KNOW...

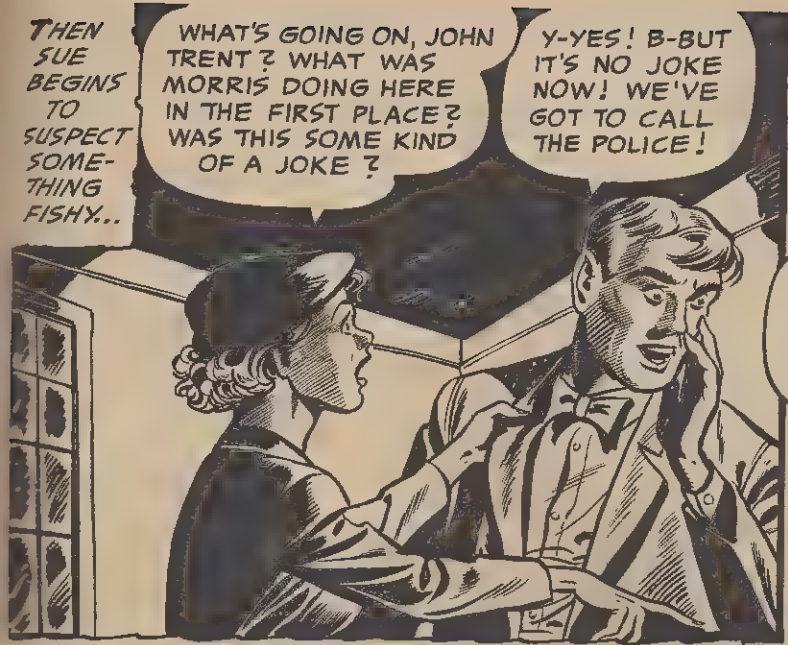

AND, AS HE HAD EXPECTED, HIS WIFE LEAPS INTO HIS ARMS, IN FEAR...
HAH-HAH! MORRIS IS DOING A FINE JOB! THAT (CHUCKLE) GROAN SOUNDED JUST LIKE A REAL GHOST MIGHT SOUND!
DON'T WORRY, PROBABLY ONLY THE WIND!
HOW COULD THAT HORRIBLE SOUND BE THE WIND? THERE ISN'T ANY WIND!

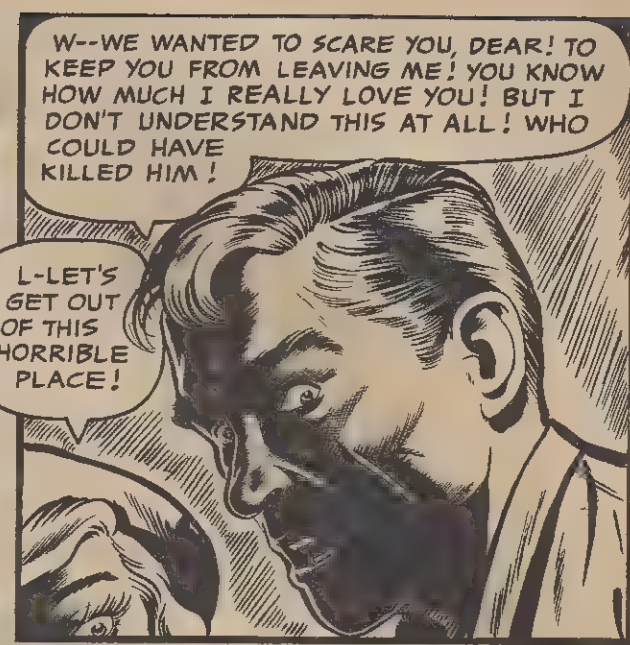

JOHN! WHERE ARE YOU GOING! DON'T YOU DARE LEAVE ME ALONE!
I'M GOING UPSTAIRS AND SEE IF IT REALLY IS A GHOST! I'M NOT AFRAID, EVEN IF YOU ARE! BUT I'M CURIOUS!
OHHHHHHHH!


SO THE SCHEME IS WORKING! SUE NOW FORGETS ALL ABOUT GOING HOME TO MOTHER! SHE IS VERY IMPRESSED WITH JOHN'S COURAGE...
DON'T WORRY, SWEETHEART! I WON'T LET ANYTHING HAPPEN TO YOU!
JOHN! YOU'RE SO BRAVE! I'M SCARED TO DEATH AND YOU DON'T EVEN SEEM TO MIND THOSE HORRIBLE NOISES!


BUT, AS THEY REACH THE TOP OF THE STAIRS, JOHN GETS A VERY NASTY SHOCK...
L--LOOK! A MAN! HIS LEGS ARE STICKING OUT OF THAT DOOR! HE LOOKS LIKE HE'S D-DEAD!
HUH! Y-YES! HE DOES LOOK DEAD!
GREAT SCOTT! I DIDN'T COUNT ON THIS!

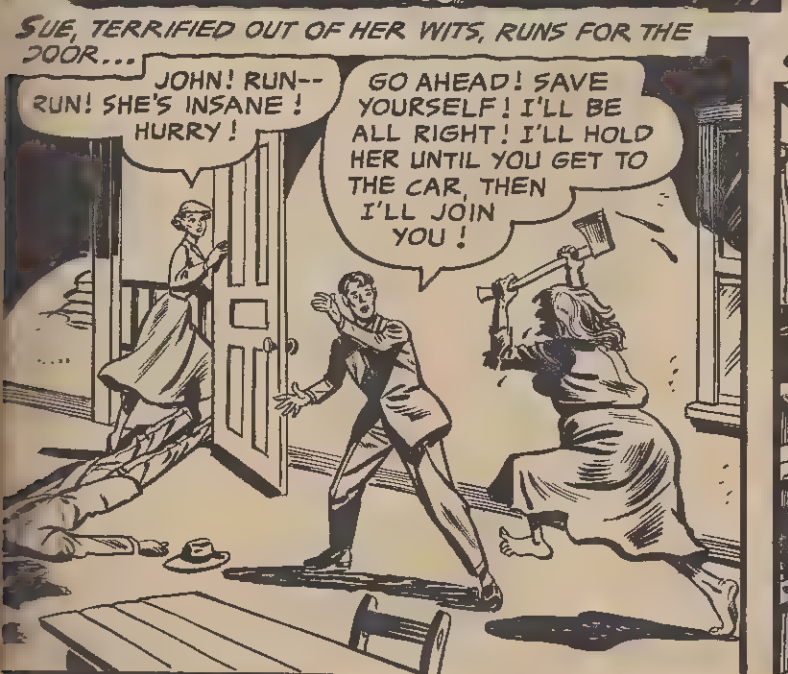
AND THE MAN IS DEAD! WORSE, THE BODY IS THAT OF MORRIS, JOHN'S FRIEND..
EEEEEEEK! JOHN! T-THAT'S MORRIS SLATTERY! B-BUT HOW..
I DON'T KNOW! B-BUT IT SURE ENOUGH IS MORRIS! AND HE'S VERY DEAD!


THEN SUE BEGINS TO SUSPECT SOMETHING FISHY...
WHAT'S GOING ON, JOHN TRENT? WHAT WAS MORRIS DOING HERE IN THE FIRST PLACE? WAS THIS SOME KIND OF A JOKE?
Y-YES! B-BUT IT'S NO JOKE NOW! WE'VE GOT TO CALL THE POLICE!


W--WE WANTED TO SCARE YOU, DEAR! TO KEEP YOU FROM LEAVING ME! YOU KNOW HOW MUCH I REALLY LOVE YOU! BUT I DON'T UNDERSTAND THIS AT ALL! WHO COULD HAVE KILLED HIM!
L-LET'S GET OUT OF THIS HORRIBLE PLACE!

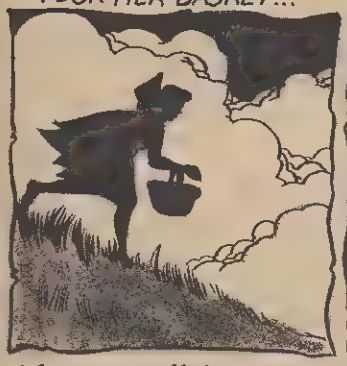
SUDDENLY, FROM BEHIND THEM, THERE IS A TERRIBLE CACKLING LAUGH...
JOHN! LOOK OUT! THAT OLD WOMAN...
HUH! W-WHO ARE YOU? WHAT ARE YOU DOING WITH THAT AXE?
HEH-HEH-HEH! YOU'LL FIND OUT SOON ENOUGH!

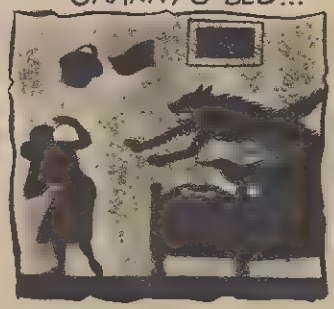
I KILLED YOUR FRIEND THERE... AND NOW I'M GOING TO KILL YOU! WITH THIS SAME AXE! JUST THE WAY I KILLED ALL THE OTHERS!

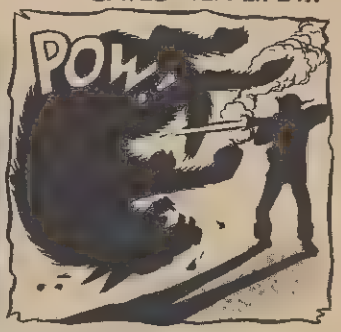

SUE, TERRIFIED OUT OF HER WITS, RUNS FOR THE DOOR...
JOHN! RUN-- RUN! SHE'S INSANE! HURRY!
GO AHEAD! SAVE YOURSELF! I'LL BE ALL RIGHT! I'LL HOLD HER UNTIL YOU GET TO THE CAR, THEN I'LL JOIN YOU!

BUT SUE SLIPS ON ONE OF THE CRUMBLING OLD STAIRS...
EEEEEEEEK! F-FALLING! OHHHHHHH!

AND GOES CRASHING DOWN, AS A HORRIBLE SCREAM RINGS OUT FROM THE ROOM, ABOVE...
OH, NO, PLEASE-- GAAAAAA!
AHHHHHH!
THERE IS A SNAPPING SOUND, AS THE WOMAN'S FRAGILE NECK IS BROKEN IN TWO...
OHH--MY HEAD! THE BLOOD--- YAAAAAA!
HEH-HEH--THOUGHT YOU COULD GET AWAY, DID YOU!
AND THEN A TERRIBLE SILENCE DESCENDS ON THE OLD HOUSE! IN THE GORY ROOM ABOVE...
HEE-HEE-- DEAD AS A DOORNAIL! CHOPPED HIM UP JUST LIKE THE OTHERS! NOW I'LL LOOK AROUND FOR SOMEONE ELSE TO KILL! AND PEOPLE ALL (CHUCKLE) THINK I'M CRAZY!
BUT THERE IS A SUDDEN WAIL OF SIRENS IN THE NIGHT, AND OUTSIDE...
HO-HO--THE POLICE AFTER ME AGAIN! THEY ALWAYS KNOW WHERE TO LOOK, CURSE THEM!
CAREFUL NOW, BOYS! YOU KNOW HOW CRAZY SHE IS!
AND...
EASY DOES IT, GRANNY! GIVE ME THAT AXE! THERE'S A NICE OLD LADY!
TAKE YOUR FILTHY HANDS OFF ME! I'M NOT GOING BACK TO THAT PLACE!
COME ALONG NOW--YOU KNOW YOU HAVE TO GO BACK TO THE ASYLUM!
LATER, AFTER THE BODIES HAVE BEEN TAKEN TO THE MORGUE-- AND THE OLD WOMAN RETURNED TO THE LUNATIC ASYLUM...
TRY TO FIGURE THAT ONE, HUH? WHAT ON EARTH WERE THOSE PEOPLE DOING IN THAT OLD HOUSE?
WE'LL NEVER KNOW! BUT THE OLD LADY, SHE'S DIFFERENT! SHE MAKES A HABIT OF GOING TO THAT HOUSE! EVERY TIME SHE ESCAPES FROM THE ASYLUM, SHE GOES THERE!
SHE MURDERED HER HUSBAND THERE YEARS AGO, THEN WENT INSANE! NOW SHE THINKS HER HUSBAND IS STILL ALIVE, AND LIVING IN THAT HOUSE! SHE ALWAYS GOES BACK TO KILL HIM! IF OTHER PEOPLE GET IN THE WAY--WELL, YOU KNOW!
POLICE 481
The End





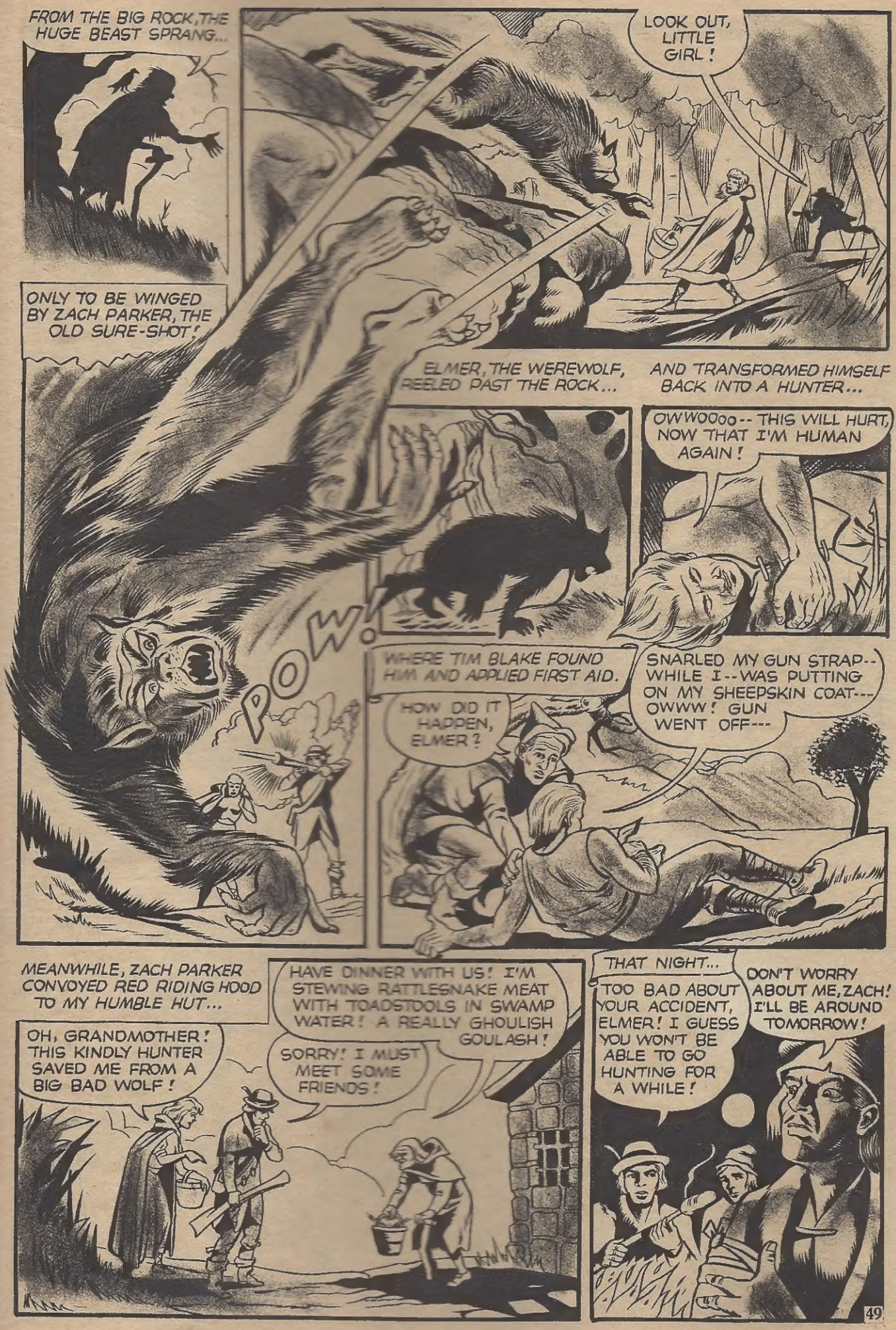


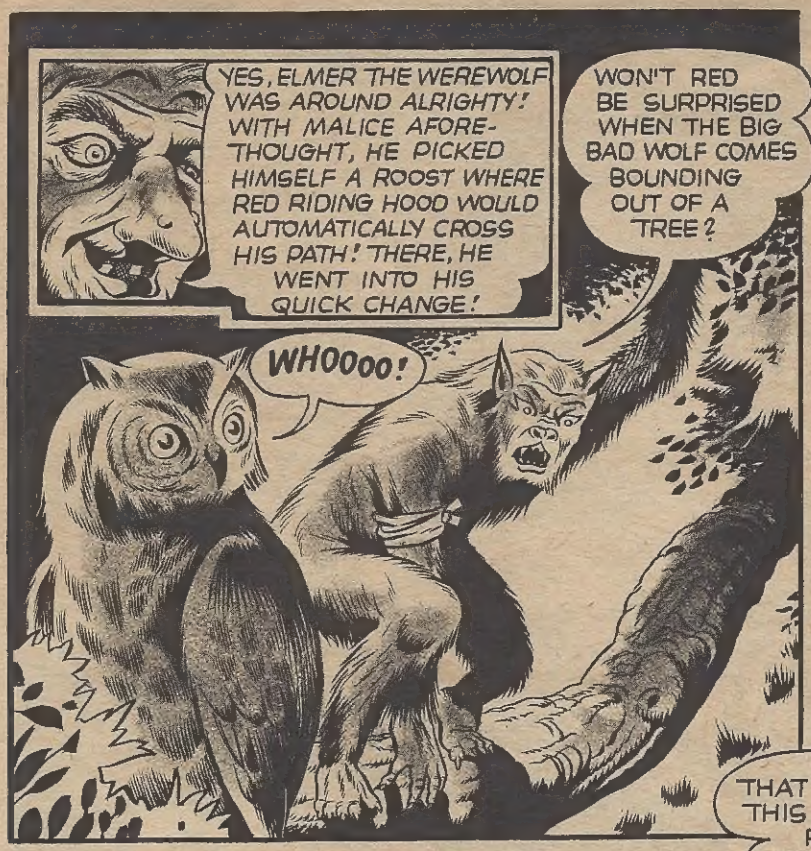
You've all heard of that, huh? You think you know all the facts and factors that really were involved? Well, brace yourself for a shocking surprise, while your old crony, THE OLD CRONE, gives you the deep, dank lowdown on the actual adventures of---

Little Red Riding Hood and the WEREWOLF

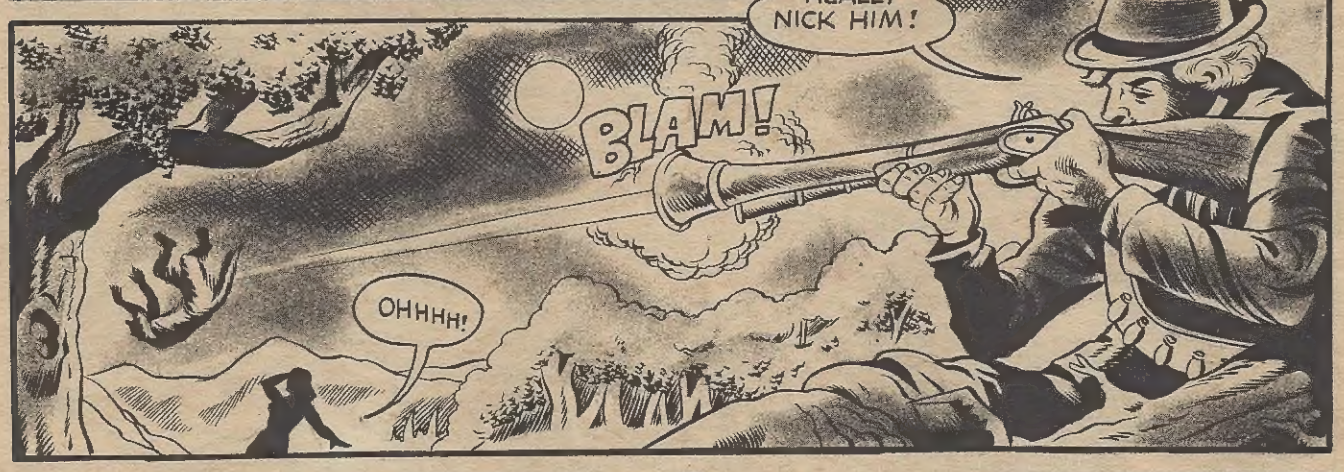
YES, I'M THE OLD CRONE WHO'S ALWAYS WEAVING IN AND OUT OF YOUR FAVORITE FAIRY TALES! AMONG OTHER THINGS -- JUST FOR THE BOOK -- I'M LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD'S GRANDMOTHER! SO HERE'S WHAT HAPPENED AFTER WE CAME TO AMERICA AND SETTLED BY THE OKEFENOKEE SWAMP IN GEORGIA!

BEING AN OLD HERB-WITCH BY PROFESSION, I LIVED IN THE SWAMP ITSELF, WHERE I COULD GATHER MANDRAKE AND BLOODWORT...
AND EXTRACT VENOM FROM HORNED TOADS AND WATER MOCCASINS...
AND PLAY TOOTSIE-FOOTSIE WITH THE HUGE 'GATORS THAT INFESTED THAT FORSAKEN REGION!
IN EXCHANGE FOR SUCH DELICACIES, RED RIDING HOOD USED TO BRING ME SUPPLIES THAT I BADLY NEEDED! SHE CARRIED THEM IN HER BASKET...
DON'T SHOOT, TIM! IT ISN'T A DEER, IT'S A GIRL!
SO IT IS! THE SAME ONE WHO WENT BY HERE YESTERDAY!
AND YOU ASK WHY SHE WORE RED? BECAUSE IT WAS HUNTING SEASON, SILLY! SHE WANTED THE HUNTERS TO SEE HER --AND SEE HER THEY DID--AND HOW!
SHE'S ON HER WAY TO SEE HER GRANDMOTHER! BUT SAY, ZACH--WHERE'S ELMER? WE WOULDN'T WANT HIM TO SHOOT HER BY MISTAKE!
WE'D BETTER BEAT THE WOODS AND WARN HIM, TIM! I'LL MEET YOU UP BY THE BIG ROCK!
BUT ALREADY, UP BY THE BIG ROCK, ELMER THE HUNTER WAS PEELING OFF HIS SHEEPSKIN COAT...
AND HIS LUPINE FEATURES WERE BARING FIERCE FANGS WHILE HIS HANDS TOOK ON THE SHAPE OF HAIRY PAWS...
AND ELMER DOWD, THE HUNTER, BECAME A WOLF IN WOLF'S CLOTHING --A WEREWOLF, THIRSTING FOR HUMAN BLOOD!


FROM THE BIG ROCK, THE HUGE BEAST SPRANG...
LOOK OUT, LITTLE GIRL!
ONLY TO BE WINGED BY ZACH PARKER, THE OLD SURE-SHOT!
ELMER, THE WEREWOLF, REELED PAST THE ROCK...
AND TRANSFORMED HIMSELF BACK INTO A HUNTER...
OWWOOOo-- THIS WILL HURT, NOW THAT I'M HUMAN AGAIN!
POW!
WHERE TIM BLAKE FOUND HIM AND APPLIED FIRST AID.
HOW DID IT HAPPEN, ELMER?
SNARLED MY GUN STRAP-- WHILE I--WAS PUTTING ON MY SHEEPSKIN COAT--- OWWW! GUN WENT OFF---
MEANWHILE, ZACH PARKER CONVOYED RED RIDING HOOD TO MY HUMBLE HUT...
OH, GRANDMOTHER! THIS KINDLY HUNTER SAVED ME FROM A BIG BAD WOLF!
HAVE DINNER WITH US! I'M STEWING RATTLESNAKE MEAT WITH TOADSTOOLS IN SWAMP WATER! A REALLY GHOULISH GOULASH!
SORRY! I MUST MEET SOME FRIENDS!
THAT NIGHT...
TOO BAD ABOUT YOUR ACCIDENT, ELMER! I GUESS YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO GO HUNTING FOR A WHILE!
DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME, ZACH! I'LL BE AROUND TOMORROW!



BUT HARD UP THE PATH, ZACH PARKER, EVER ALERT, HEARD THE OWL'S SCRITCH!

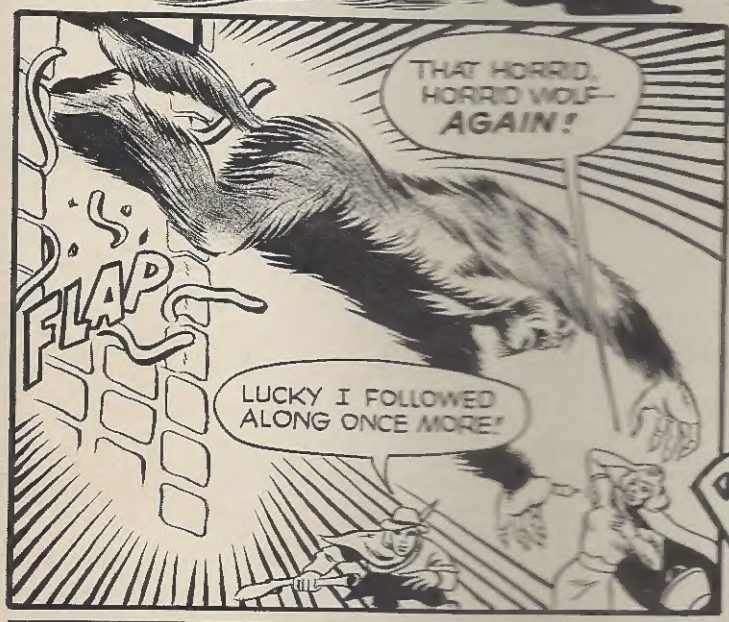


WITH DEAD-EYE AIM, ZACK FLAKKED THE WOLF AND SENT HIM KITING!

A WEEK LATER, ELMER WAS IN CIRCULATION AGAIN... HE POLED A DUGOUT CANOE UP THROUGH THE OKEFENOKEE...

AND HOBBLED HIS WAY TO MY HUT -- FROM WHICH I WAS ABSENT, AS USUAL...

THERE HE WAS GETTING READY TO PULL THE OLD GAG OF "WOLF IN GRANNY'S BED" WHEN...



AND MANAGED TO POLE THROUGH THE MUCK OF THE OKEFENOKEE TO THE HEADWATERS OF THE SUWANEE RIVER...

A HUMAN SKULL-- AND A SKELETON HAND---
I ALWAYS BRING SUCH THINGS TO GRANDMOTHER! SHE NEEDS THEM IN HER INCANTATIONS! GRANNY IS A WITCH---
YOU-- YOU'RE HIDEOUS! YOU'RE-- A WITCH TOO!
I'M MORE THAN A WITCH--AND WORSE! FAR WORSE! I AM A VAMPIRE-- A SOULLESS, UNDEAD CREATURE THAT THIRSTS FOR HUMAN BLOOD--
--LIKE YOURS!
GAHHH-HH!
A LITTLE WHILE LATER, I RETURNED TO SEE A HUGE BAT FLITTING FROM MY HUT---
HEH! I GUESS OUR LITTLE SCARLET JACKET FINALLY GOT HER MAN! HEH-HEH-- I'D BETTER GO FIND MYSELF ANOTHER HUT IN ANOTHER SWAMP! ANYWAY, THE REPTILES HAVE BEEN GETTING TOO TAME HEREABOUTS!
AND A LONG WHILE AFTER THAT, TIM BLAKE AND OTHER HUNTERS CAME LOOKING FOR ZACH-- AND FOUND HIM!
WELL, THE OLD WOLF MUST'VE CAUGHT UP WITH POOR ZACH AFTER ALL! LOOK AT THE WAY IT CLAWED HIS THROAT!
I GUESS IT MUST HAVE GOBBLED UP THE OLD LADY FIRST! THERE'S NO HIDE NOR HAIR OF HER!
BUT NOBODY WAS MORE SURPRISED THAN ELMER THE WEREWOLF...
NO ORDINARY WOLF COULD EAT UP TWO PEOPLE! I'M GOING TO WATCH FOR RED RIDING HOOD IN CASE SHE'S STILL AROUND!
SO ELMER WATCHED... AND WATCHED...
EEEK--- HEHEHEHEHEH! EEEEK!
FIVE YEARS NOW AND NO SIGN OF RED RIDING HOOD! I GUESS SOMETHING DID HAPPEN TO HER!--THOSE BATS... I WISH THEY'D GO AWAY! THEY CHATTER TOO MUCH-- ESPECIALLY THE BIG ONE!
EEEK!
EEEK!
HEH! IMAGINE THAT, A WEREWOLF WATCHING FOR A CHOICE MORTAL, AND NEVER SUSPECTING THAT SHE'S A VAMPIRE! YES, ELMER THE WEREWOLF WAS A MERE APPRENTICE IN THE GHOULISH GRISLY ART OF SEEKING HUMAN PREY, COMPARED TO MY GRANDDAUGHTER, THE VAMPIRE! NOW THAT YOU KNOW WHAT RED RIDING HOOD GREW UP TO BE, STOP BY AGAIN AND LEARN MORE ABOUT YOUR FAVORITE FAIRY-BOOK FOLK! HEEEHHHH!
The End